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THE CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN PLATO

AND THE

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY.

THE

CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN PLATO

AND THE

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY,

UNFOLDED AND SET FORTH BY

DR. C. ACKERMANN,

ARCHDEACON AT JENA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

SAMUEL RALPH ASBURY, B.A.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY

WILLIAM G T. SHEDD, D.D.

BROWN PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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T. & T. CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

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candid critic who can censure Plato severely for these misconceptions; but he would be a very imperfect expositor who would not mention them as such. There is probably no single point in the moral relations of the creation, for which we are so entirely indebted to revelation, as this of the enormity of sin and the severity of Divine judgment. Thus instructed, it is possible that the demands of Divine justice may be demonstrated accordant with the antecedent notices of the moral reason; but there is a wide difference between proving a revealed principle, and discovering it before it is revealed. We are not, then, to blame Plato severely for overlooking that mystery of Divine righteousness, which even the reiterated and explicit intimations of inspiration can scarcely persuade ourselves practically to realize. But we *are* to censure those who labour by unwarrantable glosses to dilute into the disciplinary chastenings of a wise benevolence the stern simplicity with which the Scriptures declare the awful anger of a rejected God. These teachers have abounded in every age, and in one remarkable era of our English church history were so closely and avowedly connected with Platonism (especially in its later and more mystical forms) as to have thence derived their ordinary title. Gifted with extraordinary powers of abstract contemplation, and a solemn grandeur of style, they abound with noble thoughts nobly expressed; but they are all marked with the characteristic defect of Platonized Christianity,—a forgetfulness, or inadequate commemoration of the most tremendous proof this part of the universe has ever been permitted to witness of the reality of the Divine hatred of sin—the fact of the Christian atonement' (vol. ii., p. 306–8). With this may be compared the briefer, but substantially coincident expression of thought and feeling, uttered in earlier times by Augustine, *Confes.* L. viii. c. 21: Quoniam justus es, Domine, nos autem peccavimus, etc.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE treatise of Ackermann, upon 'The Christian Element in Plato,' contains within a brief compass the best account that has yet been given of this very interesting phase of the philosophy of the Academy. It does not profess to exhibit the speculative and metaphysical aspects of Plato's system, although its incidental representations in this reference are profound and trustworthy, but aims to present the special points of contact between it and Christianity. It is occupied chiefly with those features in Platonism which have affinity with Revelation, and are favourable to the evangelical scheme.

At the same time, the delineation is discriminating. The author perceives with a clear eye the points of difference and of antagonism between the best philosophical system which the unassisted reason of man has been able to construct, and the wisdom of God in the Christian mysteries. He shows that, at the very utmost, Platonism could only awaken aspirations, and create a hunger and thirst. It could not satisfy the immortal longing; it could not supply the bread and water of life. The reader will find, for example, in the fifth chapter of the Second Part of the work, an exceedingly accurate and striking account of humanity as it is by sin, and of the utter impossibility of its regeneration by philosophy.

The work is thus an instructive treatise upon the relations of natural and revealed religion, or of ethics and the gospel; and this not in an abstract manner, but as illustrated in the

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principles and speculations of an actual system of human philosophy. As such, it will prove of much value, particularly to the theologian and the preacher, in an age when it is of great importance to distinguish justly between human reason and Divine revelation, in such a manner that the former shall not be vilified, and the latter shall maintain its pre-eminence and paramount authority.

The translator has performed his task with fidelity and good taste, and I am confident that all his readers will feel under lasting obligation to him for introducing them to an unusually suggestive volume.

WILLIAM G. T. SHEDD.

Andover Theological Seminary,
June 26, 1860.

PREFACE.

Amid the extraordinary wealth of literature on Plato, Platonism and Christianity, there is yet no work which discusses, in a manner corresponding to the present condition of science, the subject of the present treatise. For in the writings on this theme which appeared in former centuries, it has received a too superficial and empirical treatment. In view, therefore, of its great importance to theology and philosophy, and the very general interest with which it is favoured, I held it to be as necessary as suitable at this time to subject it anew to a careful treatment; more urged to it, I acknowledge, by a decided inclination, than sufficiently capacitated by a rich and profound knowledge of it.

I have laboured on this work, which I have had in view for many years, with great and constant delight and affection; but I cannot say, now that it lies completed before me, that I regard it with a feeling of unmingled gratification. For I perceive how far, notwithstanding all my efforts, it has fallen short of my conception of it. And how could it be otherwise? Platonism and Christianity are of far too great magnitude, for even the most capable person, who seeks to determine their relation to each other, to believe that he has fully succeeded in doing so. I shall consider my labour, in attempting such a determination, amply rewarded, if it be the occasion of new and more profound investigations and more perfect presentations.

The critic of my work will find much in it that he may

justly expose, much to call attention to that is overlooked or erroneously apprehended: for every truly instructive and well-meant criticism, I am beforehand heartily thankful. Much also —how could it possibly be otherwise?—will be misunderstood, distorted, or incorrectly applied. For if, as we are daily reminded, even the most intimate acquaintances and friends, in simple conversation on everyday matters, frequently misunderstand each other, and call in question their mutual statements, merely because they have not taken the trouble to apprehend clearly what has been said, we certainly cannot wonder at the multitude of misconstructions and distortions of sense which an author has to suffer from the public. The thought, as written and read, is helpless, as Plato says; it cannot defend itself, give itself in another form, and set forth more prominently its mistaken side, when it is wronged or falsely apprehended; and what is there to protect it from the swift condemnation of those whose personal or party interest requires them to find it inadmissible? Readers and critics, who really do the author the kindness of going out of themselves, and at least for so long a time as they are concerned with him, leaving their own way of regarding things, and placing themselves on the author's standpoint, are, for intelligible reasons, exceedingly rare. Every one prefers the convenient to the inconvenient; and so every reader would rather remain at home, than allow himself to be conducted by the author in paths which are not to his taste, and he assures the latter that he can see all that he has to show him from his own parlour window.

But if I cannot prevent all the misunderstandings which my work will produce, I will at least endeavour on some points, which might give occasion for them, to render myself intelligible to my benevolent readers.

Many thoughts, as it has occurred to me on reviewing my book, are expressed too boldly and briefly, and may therefore be easily abused, by a very slight application of wit. When, for instance, on p. 135, it is said, 'All real intellectual freedom

takes a concrete form from a passive state,'—this sentence might be represented, without much trouble, as one worthy of censure, if the main emphasis were laid on *passive*. But the accent is on *real;* and not freedom in and of itself is here meant, but that which appears in the phenomenal world, and manifests itself *historically* therein.

Many conceptions, propositions, and intimations recur frequently in the course of the examination. I must request that this be not everywhere regarded and blamed as unnecessary repetition. To one who ascends a mountain, the view of the country spread out beneath him is presented more than once. To the cursory glance, the recurring landscape appears always the same, but the attentive observer recognises new forms and lights in it from each new point of observation.

The examination itself is of so high and genuine human interest, that I thought myself under obligation, to procure even for those who are not by profession theologians or philosophers, the possibility of participating in it. Hence I have sought to preserve in the text a language intelligible to every educated person, and have put into the notes that which more particularly concerns the professional scholar.

The *philological* branch of Platonic study has, besides, gained little or nothing by the present treatise, since I am not philologist enough to promote the cultivation of it to any special extent. The notes themselves certainly need indulgence, particularly in respect of their form. It is exceedingly difficult, and especially so for the author concerned, to make good notes on the subject treated of, which will afford with accurate brevity that which is most important and essential of the accumulated materials. That I frequently quote, directly after each other, authors of opposite or widely divergent views, need not be immediately construed against me as clumsy syncretism or eclecticism. I will not conceal that I have still a living faith in the calm and extended power of truth, by which often the apparently most heterogeneous tendencies are inwardly held to

gether; for which reason also it gives me great pleasure to seek out and to discover in all the phenomena, in the sphere of the physical or intellectual, that which is related or homogeneous. I know that there is great danger in this endeavour, and that it is therefore disapproved and carefully shunned by many. Thinkers and observers in general may be divided, in this respect, as Goethe well remarks (Posthumous Works, 10. p. 203), into two classes; the one addicted more to the synthetic, the other to the analytic method. The former like to comprehend the manifold in certain unities, the latter cannot too sharply and finely distinguish from each other things which are similar; and this inward opposition in the manner of thinking and judging, appears only too frequently also in violent reciprocal contention. But must then the inevitable conflict, for the most part very conducive to truth, ever result only in the complete annihilation of the opposite method of regarding things? Cannot the opponents, notwithstanding all the errors which they prove in each other in particulars, acknowledge to each other the correctness of their general course of thought? Cannot they rise to the recognition of the fact, that each is necessary and excellent of its kind, and that both demand, presuppose, and complement each other, and, in case they are carefully used, perform equally essential service to science?

Some philosophers will perhaps take offence at the Christian theological colouring in which Platonism appears here, and will be inclined to charge me too hastily with misrepresentation, because they, indeed, when they read Plato, or quote from him, regard and make use of him from an entirely different point of view, and for entirely different ends. I admit the strictly philosophical and scientific bearing and character of the Platonic philosophy are far behind its practical religious tendency in my representation. But to throw most light on this very side, and to render it most prominent, was indeed my object and task; and in seeking to acquit myself of this task, I neither deny that the Platonic philosophy may be regarded from another point

somewhat otherwise than it here appears, by developing new and here unconsidered traits; nor do I even maintain that the point of view adopted in this work is absolutely the most comprehensive, or that which alone secures the most correct judgment of Platonism as a whole.

If the theologians should object to me, that in the fifth chapter I have not developed the conception of the Christian element as I should in their opinion have done, in a biblico-exegetical way; but, as they will perhaps say, have allowed myself to be led to it by a half-poetic consideration of life, I would ask them if they mean that this happened so only by chance, or perhaps only to gratify a sudden fancy, and whether the significance and necessity of exactly this course of thought have not become evident to them, both from the nature and the treatment of the whole matter.

But I have most fear that many will take up the present work with false expectations and claims, in respect of the apprehension and solution of its main problem, and, because these are not satisfied in it, will consider themselves justified in passing a sharp and bitter judgment on the work.

I think it quite possible that many will conceive of the contents of a work on the Christian element in Plato as profoundly speculative, discussing the main problems of theology and the philosophy of religion. They may even be of opinion that the problem cannot be apprehended, and still less can be solved, in any other than the designated sphere. For in what other department, they will say, than in that of speculative theology, can that be embraced, which Plato, the most theological of all heathen philosophers, manifests in his spiritual affinity with Christian revelation, whose loftiest and most essential doctrine should unquestionably be regarded as that of God and His relation to the world?

Now, those who promise themselves much excitement and satisfaction of this kind from my work, will probably not feel themselves much interested by it, and will especially find the

two principal ideas in the fifth and sixth chapters far below their intensely metaphysical expectations.

I should be sorry if some of my readers felt themselves moved to complain of a deception of this kind; but I could, in truth, give them the assurance that I am entirely innocent of it, and that they only needed to have taken my promise fairly and strictly, to have spared themselves the unpleasant feeling. I wished to illustrate and set forth the Christian element in Plato, not the relation and affinity of his theology to that of Christianity. The Christian element of the Platonic philosophy, as such, is by no means identical with the Christian spirit of his speculative doctrine of God; his theology is related to his Christianity only as the particular to the general; it is only one of the various forms in which the Christian element in him makes itself known. As I think I have shown that the essence of Christianity is contained not in its *doctrine* of salvation, but in its saving *efficiency*, so, of course, I could not seek the Christian element in Plato in his doctrine of the Being of God, but only in his believing consciousness of the *salvation* which the Divine power and goodness purpose and effect in the world.

Far, therefore, from acknowledging as well founded the censure of those who perhaps, for the reason mentioned, are dissatisfied with the manner in which I have performed my task, I, on the contrary, think myself able to lay claim to a species of commendation; for not having fallen into the error, so near at hand, of a speculative theological mode of treating my subject, and for having sought to apprehend the Christian element, not where it was not to be met with, in a single *branch*, but rather in the whole *stock*, and in the *root*.

I should have to write a treatise, and not a preface, if I should enter on a further explanation of the topic here hinted at. A thorough public discussion and explanation of it were, however, highly desirable and timely. For the old habit, which for obvious reasons still adheres to us all more or less, of thinking immediately, or even exclusively, of something doctrinal,

when the Christian element or Christianity is spoken of, is still a prolific source of obstinate errors and controversies.

The very plainness of the two principal ideas in the fifth and sixth chapters, which will be offensive to many of those who, under the name of Plato, have in mind all sorts of sublime and difficult theological ideas, may, it seems to me, serve as a not wholly insignificant token that I have taken the right course in this investigation. For the Christian element, as it actually exists—with which I have had principally to do in this examination—like the Gospel, appears always plain and outwardly mean. The speculative grandeur which it has within it is not properly developed till after it is transplanted into the purely speculative region of philosophical theology. Perhaps, if God gives me time and strength, I may hereafter attempt to draw a parallel also in this respect between Platonism and Christianity.

And now may He, whom in truth all powers serve, even those who neither know nor desire it, permit the present work to form a slight contribution to the furtherance of His kingdom, and to this end accompany it with His Spirit and blessing as it goes forth into the tumultuous world!

JENA, *February* 1835.

CONTENTS.

I.

THE SUBJECT VIEWED EMPIRICALLY.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

EARLY RECOGNITION OF A CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN PLATO, . . . 17

High regard of Plato by the Church fathers; in the Greek, in the Latin Church.—Opposite judgments of the Church fathers concerning philosophy in general.—Admirers of Plato in the Middle Ages, and in modern times.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROXIMATE REASON OF THIS RECOGNITION.—PASSAGES AND DOCTRINES IN PLATO'S WRITINGS WHICH HAVE A CHRISTIAN TONE, . 30

On the genuineness of Plato's works.—Minor passages from Plato parallel with New Testament passages. — Resemblances between Platonic and Mosaic ordinances.—Other longer passages from Plato which breathe a Christian spirit.—Comparison of important doctrines of the Platonic theology and ethics with related Christian dogmas.—Resemblance between Platonism and Christianity in some formal points.—Small value of all these particulars in a strictly scientific respect.

II.

THE SUBJECT DEVELOPED GENETICALLY.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

REMOVAL OF FALSE VIEWS AND OPINIONS CONCERNING PLATO.—RELATION OF PLATO TO THE NEW PLATONISTS, AND TO ARISTOTLE, . 69

False representations of Plato diffused both by his admirers and his opponents; alleged encouragement of extravagant feelings by him; Plato's low estimate of feeling demonstrated; on the so-called Platonic Love.—Whether Plato was an enthusiastic idealist.—Plato accused of Syncretism, decried as a Phantast.—Distinction of New Platonism from Platonism.—Low opinion of Aristotle of the Platonic philosophy; disputes between the Platonists and Aristotelians; reason for the misunderstanding between Plato and Aristotle in the intrinsic and necessary difference of their intellectual tendencies.

CHAPTER II.

HINTS FOR A LIVING PERCEPTION OF PLATO'S GREATNESS, . . . 107

The first impression from Plato's works is seldom a satisfactory one; why?—By what means the ill-humour of the readers of the Platonic writings is gradually removed.—Fire of the Platonic intellect; finished presentation; irony; organic unity of his works; the harmonious constitution of the soul and mind of their author; his strength in severe thinking.

CHAPTER III.

PRINCIPAL FORMS OF ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY, AND ITS POSITION WITH RESPECT TO LIFE, ... 131

History of the development of philosophy generally; the most favourable conditions for this existed in Greece.—Ionicism.—Eleaticism.—Pythagorism and the Sophists.—Significance of Platonism in and for the history of philosophy.—Influence of Socrates on Plato.—Apparent similarity, real difference, between the ancient and modern philosophy.—Probable objections to this discussion.

CHAPTER IV.

PAGE

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY, ... 151

Starting-point of the thinker, the question of Being.—Original identity of being and thinking, relative separation and re-union of the two.—The Becoming and its power.—The right relation between existence and non-existence.—The Being of existence.—Ideas.—Reference of ideas to the Becoming; Life.—God the original of the universe and life.—Departure of the world and man from God.—Deceptive appearance.—Unhappiness.—Philosophy as saviour.—Dialectics: its relation to Ethics and Physics.—Harmony in the great and the small; the reason and end of the world as a Divine work.—The germs of Plato's system.—Esoteric and exoteric doctrines.—Significance of the dialogal form for the Platonic philosophy.—Indications for a correct apprehension of the three main conceptions in Platonism: Science, the Good, and the Ideas.

CHAPTER V.

DEFINITION OF THE CHRISTIAN ELEMENT, ... 188

The point at which the essential feature of Christianity is most surely perceived.—Fundamental impulse of life.—Difference between the life of nature in the great whole, and the natural life of man; the latter relatively more hateful than the former.—The deep degradation of humanity as developed without higher influence.—Life recognises its evil to be its guilt.—The life of Christ that which will alone procure salvation.—Corroboration of the conception thus obtained of the Christian element from the Bible, and by the organic development of all its principal ideas from one.—The perception of the Jewish and heathen elements which is connected with this.

CHAPTER VI.

THAT WHICH IS CLEARLY CHRISTIAN IN PLATO AND HIS PHILOSOPHY, . 231

The most expressive conception of this offers itself unsought.—Proof that it embraces all that is essential to it.—Teleological character of Platonism; the relation of this to Plato's theology.—The Platonic way of regarding the world and man, like the Christian; the Platonic striving to enlighten and bless

PAGE

mankind and the world, like the Christian ; the Platonic faith in the historical existence of a Divine power of redemption, a truly Christian one.

CHAPTER VII.

NON-CHRISTIAN AND UNCHRISTIAN ELEMENTS IN PLATO ; CONCLUSION, . 252

Opposers of the Platonic Christianity.—Single unchristian and non-Christian elements in Plato's works.—The Pantheistic element in his theology.—The chief difference between Platonism and Christianity ; development of all the other deviations from this.—Incomparably high value of Christianity.

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATION OF SOME PASSAGES FROM PLATO REFERRED TO IN THE SIXTH CHAPTER, ... 269

IST OF AUTHORS REFERRED TO, ... 279

THE

CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN PLATO

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PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY.

I.

THE SUBJECT VIEWED EMPIRICALLY.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY RECOGNITION OF A CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN PLATO.

It has been at all times felt and remarked, that there are some Christian elements in Plato, more indeed than in any other one of the ancient classical authors and philosophers. There has long been a disposition to apply to Plato what our Lord said to the Pharisee, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' (Mark xii. 34.)

Plato stood high in the regard of the ancient Christian Church, especially so long as the Greek Church Fathers were peculiarly the formers and leaders of theology. This was induced, partly by the custom of the times of deriving philosophical instruction principally from Plato, and they attached

themselves to him in preference to any other, partly from conviction, because they found in him more Christian elements than in Aristotle. The remark of Patricius is, in the main, correct, that the elevation of Aristotle by scholasticism and the University of Paris, was in exact opposition to the reigning view concerning him in the ancient Christian Church.

'The Platonic dogmas,' says Justin Martyr, 'are not foreign to Christianity. If we Christians say, that all things were created and ordered by God, we seem to enounce a dogma of Plato, and between our view of the Being of God and his, the article alone appears to make a difference.'

It is not difficult to conceive how Justin arrived at this way of thinking concerning the relation of Christianity to Platonism. He was, indeed, as he himself relates,[1] an enthusiastic admirer of Plato, before he found in the Gospel that full satisfaction which he had sought earnestly, but in vain, in the other. And, though the Gospel stood infinitely higher in his view than the Platonic philosophy, yet he regarded the latter as a sort of preliminary stage to the former. In the same way did the other apologetic writers express themselves concerning Plato and his philosophy, especially the most spirited and philosophically most important among them, Athenagoras, whose Apology is one of the most admirable works of Christian antiquity. It was certainly not merely their general knowledge and reverence for the Platonic philosophy which influenced these men in making reference to it so frequently in their defences, and in quoting whole passages from Plato's writings; they were also induced, by the special object of their apologies, which they believed would be best attained by this means. What could seem to them more adapted to gain the favour of the heathen magistrates and emperors for Christianity, than the indication of the many coincidences of Christian and Platonic doctrines?

[1] Apol. 2, 96, d. Dial. c. Tr. 103, d. etc.

The striking resemblance between them the church fathers sought to explain principally by the acquaintance which Plato made in his journey to Egypt, in part with learned Jews, and in part with the Jewish Scriptures. Justin was not the first who derived the Platonic Theology and Ethics from this source; the Jewish historian Josephus,[2] and the Jewish Peripatetic Aristobulus,[3] had already done this, and even the Platonist Numenius had called Plato directly an ‘ Atticising Moses.”[4] It was a prevalent opinion in the Christian Church, that Plato and the heathen writers generally, had stolen the best and most beautiful parts of their writings from the Bible, especially the prophetical books. The heathen followers of the divine Plato cast this reproach back on the Christians. Celsus says that Christ took His most renowned sayings from Plato, and that the whole system of Christian doctrine consists really of Platonic dogmas, in part misunderstood and in part perverted.[5] However erroneous these opinions were, they certainly afford a strong proof of the general feeling among the ancients, that Platonism and Christianity were nearly related.

This relation, Justin, and those church fathers who were not disinclined to the heathen philosophy, sought further to explain on another foundation than that already adduced, viz., the universal and long existing light of divine revelation. God's entire act of revelation was connected by them, as is well known, with the idea of the Logos, and this, moreover, was conceived of by them more in the sense of Philo than in that of John. To the divine Logos corresponded, in their view, the Logos or rational spirit in man. The fullest glory of the eternal Logos, they taught, appeared to the world in Christ; but long before this appearance, he had already operated in the world, and scat-

[2] Joseph. c. Apion. 2, 1079, ed. Haverc.

[3] Euseb. Praep. Evang. 13, 12.

[4] Clem. Al. Strom. 1, 251, b. Cf. Euseb. Praep. Evang. 11, 10, p. 527, ed. Viger.

[5] Orig. c. Cels. 6, 640. c; 641, 644. c; 7, 714, a. etc. (Ed. Delar).

tered everywhere single rays of His light; not merely the pious patriarchs of the old covenant, were enlightened and blessed by a believing hope in the day of the Lord, but also among the heathen sages the rational spirit had, through the ever active power of the eternal Logos, obtained single perceptions of the truth. Hence Justin had no hesitation in numbering them among Christians on earth and among the blessed in heaven.

It was especially Clement of Alexandria, who sought to derive the true and beautiful in Greek philosophy, particularly in Plato, from the original source of highest wisdom.[6] He was a decided Platonist, although he called himself an Eclectic. His writings are full of quotations from Plato, and of compari sons between Platonic and Christian doctrines. He regarded faith as the foundation of theology, as well as of Christian life, and attached to it accordingly a high value; yet, we must not, he says, with respect to science, be satisfied with simple faith; we must rather seek to develop it by a careful process of reasoning, to elevate it and transform it into a real scientific knowledge (Gnosis). As a consequence of this view he held true philosophy and true religion to be identical. Their philosophy, though deficient, served to the Greeks, like the law to the Jews, for a schoolmaster or leader to Christ, yea, even for a sort of Christ through whom they might be justified before God. Accordingly he was also inclined to regard Christianity as Platonism raised to perfection and brought out into life and activity. A view which he is indeed careful not to enounce plainly, but which he held in common with many others, and which is still apparent even in the strict Augustine.[7]

His Platonico-Christian way of thinking, and the endeavour to represent Platonism and Christianity as friendly to each other, Clement handed down to his spirited and fertile pupil, Origen,

[6] The principal passage is Strom. 1. 104, a. Cf. 7, 505, and 7, 526, c. sq.

[7] Aug. c. Acad. 3, 20. Cf. Civ. Dei. 8, 8, and especially Retractt. 1, 13

to whom also Platonism came from another source, namely, from Ammonius Saccas, his instructor in philosophy. There are, indeed, in Origen fewer single passages than in the other Church Fathers, in which he mentions the Christianity of Plato with commendation, he often comes out even in decided opposition to it.[8] But, notwithstanding this, Origen must be accounted one of the greatest admirers of Plato, in the Christian Church. His Platonising is seen less in the details than in the whole of his teaching, which is organically penetrated with Platonic ideas, and in part rose out of them.

A Church Father of the first centuries, speaking generally, did not easily escape the influence of Platonism; even in the doctrinal views of the 'ecclesiastically dogmatic' Irenæus, Platonic elements break through here and there. None, however, instituted so thorough a comparison between Platonic and Christian dogmas, and brought out the harmonious relation of Platonism to Christianity, so industriously as Eusebius of Cæsarea. He calls Plato 'the only Greek who has attained the porch of (Christian) truth,'[9] and the 11th, 12th, and 13th books of his Evangelical Preparation have at bottom no other aim than to prove this proposition. As he designates the points in which Christ and Plato agree, he is also not silent concerning those in which they differ. And thus, at last, is manifested in him, as in all the church fathers, the lofty superiority which Christianity possesses above even the highest and best heathen philosophy.

Theodoret also labours to show this in his interesting work on 'The healing of the Grecomania.' In this work, he gives the Platonic philosophy preference above every other, because it comes nearest to the chief doctrines of Christianity. Hence also, it exercised, according to his view, an influence preparatory for Christianity, but did not possess inward energy sufficient to penetrate and reform the world.

[8] C. Cels. 6, 630, a, 7, 724, c. etc.

[9] Praep. Evang. 13, 14.

It is well known, and as easily understood, in how commendatory and appreciative a manner the great Augustine expresses himself concerning Plato and his philosophy, especially in his celebrated work, 'De civitate Dei,' which a modern investigator calls 'the ripest fruit of the inward union of Christian and Platonic wisdom.' He, like Justin, had been a zealous adherent of the Academy before he had recognized in Christ the fulness of light and life, and though, as a Christian, he took up arms against his former associates, yet he always confessed that the Platonists were the most Christian among all the heathen, and, 'that they only needed to change their words and opinions a little to become true Christians.' A passage in his Confessions is especially noteworthy in this connection, where he thanks God that he became acquainted with Plato's writings first, and with the Gospel afterwards, for, if the case had been reversed, he might have been drawn away from the firm foundation of his piety, or have taken up the opinion, that having even these books alone, one could attain to Christian piety.[10]

By the side of this expression of Augustine may be placed the opinion of Bellarmine, which he gave to Pope Clement VIII., when the latter proposed to introduce the Platonic philosophy formally into the higher course of instruction. Bellarmine gave his counsel against this procedure, on the ground that the Platonic philosophy comes nearest to Christian theology, and hence, is most adapted to attract those minds which are seeking Christianity, and thus to prevent their further advance.

Philosophy was less loved in the Western than in the Eastern Church; the former apprehended rather the practical earnestness of Christianity, the latter was more inclined to view it from its speculative side. Hence violent invectives against the old heathen philosophy are not rare in the writings of the other Latin Fathers; and they often express themselves even

[10] Confess. 7, 20.

concerning Plato with a certain contemptuousness. Especially must be mentioned the glowing Tertullian. To him the whole heathen philosophy is hateful; obscurity and conceit seem to him its primal elements,[11] and Platonism, he regards, as the most eminent source of all heresies and perversions of the Gospel. We meet with similar views and expressions in Jul. Firmicus, Arnobius, and Lactantius.[12] The witty Hermias also stands, as regards his contempt of philosophy, on the side of the Latins.

Yet so strict a separation of the church fathers into a right and left side with respect to their views of philosophy and Platonism, as is usually made, and may appear to have been undertaken in what has been said above, cannot be carried out and justified. If we would see our way clearly through the apparently great contradictions which the church fathers afford with respect to their estimate of Platonism, we must seek an entirely different point of view from that usually and most easily adopted. We must before all things be convinced of the decided position of all the church fathers within Christian or evangelical truth, and recognize their deep and enthusiastic reverence for it. Nothing, not the glory of the world, nor the splendour of merely human wisdom, was able to make them falter, or to draw them from the position which they had honestly chosen. They do not stand together before the Gospel and philosophy with unbiassed minds; and when they declare for the Gospel, choose it in consequence of an intelligent appreciation and examination of it; much rather is the elective determination of the mind long since past, and they are captivated by the glory of the Lord and in favour of the Gospel; and however variously and in opposition to each other they may express themselves concerning the value of

[11] Apol. 46, 47. Adv. Herm. 8, c. haer. 7, de an. 23, Cf. 55.

[12] Jul. Firm. de error. prof. rel. 2, 1, etc. Arnob. Adv. 9. 2, 10, 11, and especially 50. Lact. Inst. 3. 3, 19, 21, etc. Cf. Theoph. ad Ant. 3, 390, b; 381, e sq.

philosophy and its relation to Christianity, all these expressions recur to the one fundamental view common to all of them on this subject; Philosophy was of *little* value to them, as such, and their estimation of it, whether slight[13] or high, had respect only to its agency as preparatory to Christianity and as conducive to the development of Christian faith. Their commendation of Plato did not proceed from a heart divided between Plato and Christ; their whole ardour and enthusiasm was ever unalterably directed to the Lord; and when they pointed, with commendation, to Plato, this was only because he seemed to them to point to Christ, and because, in their opinion, if he had lived till the time of Christ, he would have fallen in homage before the Lord Jesus, and would have beheld with joy the realization of his ideals in and through Him. They valued and reverenced the Platonic philosophy therefore, merely on account of its relation of ministry to the great work of Redemption,—a relation appointed by God Himself; outside of this connection, and in so far as the New Platonist endeavoured to give to the philosophy an entirely different meaning and value from that above designated, it appeared to them a vain and objectionable thing, and its pretension to pass for something *in and of itself*, they considered an assumption which was not by any means to be tolerated. By this it can be explained, that we find so often in the same church fathers contradictory expressions concerning philosophy and Platonism, and hence it is, that the philosophy-hating Arnobius and Lactantius frequently designated philosophers as participating in Christian truth, while Origen, who was full of love and admiration for Plato, becomes at times a most violent opponent of philosophy and Plato! Facts of this kind must, of course, be weighed against each other, if we would arrive at a just view of the much discussed and questioned Platonism of the church fathers.

[13] Just. Ap. 1, 46. Dial. c Tr. 102, a. A particularly beautiful passage in Athen. leg. p. 288, b. sq. Clem. Al. Strom. 1, 217; 6, 465, etc.

There was, in general, in Christian antiquity, a great and decided disposition to bring Plato within the circle of the Gospel, and to represent his teaching as similar to the evangelical. Hence the younger Apollinaris made the remarkable attempt to re-cast the New Testament into Platonic dialogues! Hence, also, the legend arose, and became widely diffused, that Plato came into immediate contact with Christ on His descent into hell, and was by Him redeemed and raised to heaven.

In the middle ages and in modern times, there has not been wanting a due acknowledgment of the Christian element in Plato. The ancient reverence for Plato did indeed decrease on the rise of the scholastic philosophy, and that for Aristotle took its place; their ignorance of Greek also kept the schoolmen far from Plato, since translations of his works were less widely diffused than of those of Aristotle. Yet the usual view of the Platonic philosophy maintained its ground even in scholasticism, though, in some cases, only as a reminiscence, not as a living product of independent study. There were two circumstances especially, which ensured the continuance of this view in the middle ages, the accordance of Plato and Aristotle in all essential points, which had been expressed in antiquity, and was very generally accepted by the schoolmen, but chiefly the tendency to mystical theology, which had become strong since the fifth and sixth centuries, and was increased by scholasticism. The so-called Areopagite Dionysius has long passed for the father and founder of this theology; and his theological system was nothing else but New Platonism translated into Christian phraseology. The publication and diffusion of the writings of Dionysius was zealously promoted by the Platonizing Scotus Erigena.

The all-revered Augustine also contributed not a little to the spread and high estimation of Platonico-Christian ideas in the middle ages. The Platonico-Augustinian views appear most prominently in the celebrated Anselm of Canterbury; but even in Abelard, who was, in certain respects, his complete opposite,

the rigorous Bernard of Clairvaux found this especially blameworthy, that he laboured so zealously to prove the Christianity of Plato. Yet Bernard himself, on account of his mystical principles, was not incorrectly declared to be a Platonist,—for what he teaches of the contemplative life and of self-denying love, is certainly Platonic.

In proportion as the mystic was victorious over the scholastic theology, Plato regained that high consideration which he had formerly enjoyed without a rival in the Christian Church. Even if the mystics did not call attention, in express words to the Christian elements of the Platonic philosophy, yet their very appearance furnishes a speaking testimony in its favour; for their Christianity is (so to speak) only the developed and manifested Christianity of Platonism. And here the profound and spiritual Tauler deserves especial mention.

Plato, however, became the object of a particularly enthusiastic admiration at the revival of classical literature in Italy. In the house of the Medici, in Florence, and under the leadership of Ficinus, who, as is well known, wrote a work on the theology of Plato, was instituted a formal Platonic Academy; the birth-day festival of the great master, which had not been celebrated since the death of Porphyry, was restored, and it was passages from Plato's works which Cosmo de Medici commended, even on his death-bed, for their Christianity and consoling power.

Single testimonies for the Christian character of the Platonic philosophy, may also be drawn from the period of the Reformation. The classically-educated Erasmus,[14] especially, did not neglect to call attention to this. The revered Melancthon also delivered an excellent panegyric on Plato,[15] although in spite of his friend Luther's anti-Aristotelian sentiments, he was much more inclined to Aristotelianism than to Platonism.

The times after the Reformation were not adapted to aid the

[14] Eras. Adhort. ad Christ, phil. studium. (Opp. Basle. 1540, iv. p 119).
[15] Melancth. Oratt. t. 2. p. 347, sq.

Protestant theologians to a calm and appreciative view of Plato. Yet a number of writings might be mentioned of the 16th, as well as the 17th and 18th centuries, principally, however, by Catholics, of which some have, for their sole object, to compare the Platonic with the Christian doctrines, and to show the connection between them, while others indicate the relationship only incidentally and in passing. Those who maintained the agreement of Platonism with Christianity, were, of course, attacked by opponents, both numerous and violent, particularly among the Protestants.

Some of the most important friends of the Platonic philosophy in this period were Steuchus Eugubinus,[16] Franciscus Patricius,[17] and Petrus Calanna.[18] Patricius enumerates forty-three propositions, in which Plato harmonizes with the Christian theology, but Aristotle does not. Nor less did Mornæus, in his Apology[19] for the Christian religion, Vieri,[20] Pansa,[21] and Gale,[22] labour to procure the recognition of the Christian spirit of Platonism. But this theme was treated most at large, in an extensive work by Livius Galantes, which, however, can lay little claim to real scientific and philosophical importance.[23]

We may also consider, as a recommendation of the Platonic philosopheme, on the side of its Christianity, the copious and well known work of Cudworth, the 'Intellectual System,'[24] the value of which has been considerably increased by the editing

[16] Steuch. Eugub. de perenni philosophia. Bas. 1542.

[17] Fr. Patricius Aristoteles exotericus, in the Appendix to his Nova de universis philos. Ferr. 1591, fol.

[18] Petr. Calanna, Philosophia seniorum, sacerdotia et Platonica. Panorm. 1599.

[19] *Mornæus* de verit. vel. christianæ. Antwerp, 1580.

[20] Fr. *de Vieri* Compendium doctrinæ plat. quatenus cum Christ fide conspirat. 1517.

[21] *Pansa*. de consensu ethnicæ et Christ. philosophiæ. Marburg. 1605.

[22] *Gale*, Atrium Gentilium. Oxford. 1672.

[23] Liv. *Galantes* de Christ. theologiæ cum Platonica comparatione. Bol. 1627, fol.

[24] Ralph *Cudworth*. Systema intellectuale. Jena. 1733 fol.

of that thorough investigator, Mosheim. Reactions, however, from the threatening preponderance of Platonism, did not fail to make their appearance also in England.

In later and most recent times, the Christian element of the Platonic philosophy has not been treated or demonstrated in any great work devoted exclusively to this subject. Not a few references to it, however, occur in theological and philosophical works. The able writings of Bautain[25] and Dégérando,[26] especially, contain such hints and observations: the short history of Platonic philosophy also, by Combes-Dounous, may be mentioned here. The Dane Luxdorph wrote on the margin of his Plato, the parallel passages from the Bible which seemed appropriate to him, and he found many such, both in the Old and New Testaments. Since his death, this collection of passages has been published with notes by Worm. Wettstein has drawn similar parallels between Christian and Platonic sentences, in his well-known edition of the New Testament, which has a general reference to ancient classical literature.

Among German philosophers, Jacobi, whom Schelling justly calls the spiritual kinsman of Plato, is the principal one, who has perceived and called attention to the inclination of the Platonic to the Christian theology;[27] and among German theologians, Stäudlin has done most service in promoting the investigation of this subject. He rightly places Plato near to Christianity, but may have erred, in that he is inclined with Augustine to believe, that Plato would have acknowledged Jesus as his Lord and Redeemer, if it had been granted to him to have lived till His appearance on earth. Grotefend, in his valuable prize-essay, expresses himself more correctly and more

[25] *Bautain* La morale de l'evang. comparée à la mor. des philosophes. Strasbourg, 1828.

[26] *Dégérando* Hist. comparée des systêmes de philos. 2° Ed. Paris. 1822.

[27] *Jacobi* Sämmtl. Wke. (Leipzic 1815) 2, 123, etc., *Schelling* vom Ich. S. 40.

cautiously, on the friendly understanding which, in part, really exists between Platonism and Christianity, and which in part is only apparent.[28]

A few cursory indications only have been adduced from the history of philosophy and theology, to establish the main proposition of this chapter, *that the Christian element in Plato was early noted and spoken of.* But these few indications are unquestionably quite sufficient to prove and corroborate this assertion.

[28] See List of authors in the Appendix.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROXIMATE REASON OF THIS RECOGNITION.—PASSAGES AND DOCTRINES IN PLATO'S WRITINGS WHICH HAVE A CHRISTIAN TONE.

Having now seen that Plato was considered almost universally, and, from early times, the most Christian of all the heathen, the question next presses itself upon our attention; wherein lies the ground for this judgment, or what is it that has earned this acknowledgment in Plato's favour? And whither should we turn to obtain an answer to this question rather than to his writings? But before we investigate these, we must seek to gain at least some degree of certainty with respect to their genuineness.

Plato's renown being so great, it was certain that many writings would be introduced to the world under his name, which did not proceed from him. Hence even the ancients distinguished between the genuine writings and those which had been forged in his name, to attract attention. But they were not generally so severe in their criticism as the moderns, and hence allowed many dialogues to pass for genuine productions of Plato, which have been detained by modern critics, and after careful examination rejected as spurious. No doubt, this severity has been excessive, especially in the case of *Socher*,[1] who will not even allow the dialogues,—Sophist, Statesman, and Parmenides, to be Plato's. The treatment of the excellent

[1] See list of authors in the Appendix.

Ast[1] is indeed milder, but, doubtless, too severe also is the sentence of rejection which he pronounces on Meno, Theages, the Apology, and the Laws. Ritter[1] decides most fairly, and certainly most correctly, when he attributes to Plato most of the dialogues lately attacked, but declares them to be unimportant with respect to their spirit and contents. He rightly designates the Epistles, Theages, Hipparchus 1, and Alcibiades 1, as spurious writings, but having the Platonic way of thinking.

This is not the place to enter more particularly into these criticisms, nor is it necessary for our object. In order to discover the Christian element in Plato's philosophy, we shall rely principally on his undoubtedly genuine writings,—Phædrus, Protagoras, Gorgias, Phædo, Parmenides, the Sophist, Theætetus, Philebus, Cratylus, the Banquet, the Statesman, the Republic, Timæus, and Critias; and if we take others into consideration, it is on account of *such* passages and thoughts as have an unmistakeable Platonic stamp, though Plato himself may not have indited them. This is especially the case with the Laws. Plato can hardly have been their author. But setting aside certain digressions and feeblenesses, they are composed so entirely in his spirit, that they might be presented with as much justice under his name as Deuteronomy under that of Moses.

If now we take a survey of Plato's writings, we think we shall soon be able to discover the reason of this recognition, by Christians, with which he has been favoured. We meet with not a few places which strikingly remind us of passages in the Holy Scriptures, and have even a surprising verbal resemblance to these.

In the Phaedo, for instance, the destiny of men after death is described. It is there said of the tormented: 'they call on those whom they injured, and entreat and implore them to suffer them to go out into the lake, and to receive them,' etc.—just as

[1] See list of authors in the Appendix.

Jesus relates of the rich man who was in hell and torment.[2] 'To be very rich and good at the same time,' it is said in the Laws, 'is impossible;'[3] Jesus said, 'a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xix. 23.) In the Banquet, 'a cutting off of hands and feet is spoken of in the same sense in which Jesus speaks of it.'[4] (Matt. v. 30, xviii. 8.) As Jesus said to His disciples: 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,' etc. (Matt. x. 28), so Plato represents Socrates as declaring before his judges, that he feared and shunned acting unjustly and disobeying God more than death.[5] 'I must obey God rather than you, men,' says Socrates in the same passage,[6] just as the Apostles, when forbidden to preach, gave this same answer to the Council in Jerusalem. (Acts v. 29.) In fact Socrates regarded his business to instruct and better men, with the same earnestness, as having been committed to him by God, with which the Apostles did the proclamation of the Gospel.[7] The simple truth: 'He is just and well-pleasing to God, who acts justly and piously towards the gods,'[8] is found in almost the same words in John. (1 Jno. iii. 7.) The passage in the Republic,[9] where the State within men is spoken of, reminds us of the beautiful saying of our Lord, 'the kingdom of heaven is within you.' 'No man can serve two masters,' says our Lord, 'to honour riches,' maintains Plato, 'and at the same time practise temperance is impossible, since either the one or the other must necessarily be neglected.'[10] What Paul writes of those 'who run in a race,' etc. (1 Cor.

[2] Phaedo (Ed. Steph) 114, a. [i. p. 123] cf. Luke xiv. 23. The references to Plato's Works in brackets will be throughout to the English Translation pub. by H. G. Bohn, in six voll. London, 1854, etc.

[3] Legg. 5, 742, e. [v. p. 1811]. Celsus maintained that Jesus took this saying from Plato. Origen, c. Cels. 6, 641.

[4] Conv. 205, e. [iii. p. 540].

[5] Apol. 29, b. [i. p. 16].

[6] Apol. d. [i. p. 17].

[7] Ib. 30. a. [i. p. 17].

[8] Gorg. 507, b. [i. p. 210]

[9] Luke xvii. 21. Rep. 9, 591, e. [ii. p. 282].

[10] Luke xvi. 13. Rep. 8, 555, c. [ii. p. 245]

ix. 24 ; 2 Tim. iv. 7). Plato also expresses, with not less emphasis, when he says, 'But such as are true racers, arriving at the end, both receive the prizes and are crowned ;'[11] and he concludes his work on the Republic in the following elevated and truly Christian manner :[12] 'But if the company will be persuaded by me ; considering the soul to be immortal, and able to bear all evil and good, we shall always persevere in the road that leads upwards, and shall by all means pursue justice in unison with prudence, that so we may be found both to ourselves and the gods, both while we remain here and when we afterwards receive its rewards, like victors assembled together ; and so, both here and in that journey of a thousand years which we have described, we shall be happy.' To whom does not this passage recall those beautiful words, 'Set your affections on things above,' etc. ; and 'our conversation is in heaven' etc. (Col. iii. 2 ; Phil. iii. 20) ? And does not the description which is given of Love in the Banquet,[13] correspond in many points with that which Paul gives of it ? 1 Cor. xiii. 3, seq. Love, it is said, 'is he who divests us of all feelings of alienation, and fills us with those of intimacy ; introducing mildness and banishing a harshness of manners ; the friendly giver of good-will, the non-giver of enmity ; gracious to the good ; looked up to by the wise, admired by the gods,' etc. So the condition of the blessed is presented with almost the same features in the Phaedo[14] as in Rev. xxi. 4 ; and when, in the 10th book of the Laws,[15] the impossibility of escaping the judgments of God is set forth, this seems like a complete parallel to Ps. cxxxix. 1, sqq. The saying of Paul also, 'All things work together for good to them that love God' (Rom. viii. 28), finds its perfect counterpart in Plato. In the 10th book of the Republic[16] it is said, 'And shall we not

[11] Rep. 10, 613, c. [ii. p. 304]. [12] Ib. 621, c. [ii. p. 312].

[13] Conv. 197, d. [iii. p. 524]. [14] Phaed. 81, a. [i. p. 84].

[15] Legg. 10, 905, a. [v. p. 445]. The resemblance between the two passages is very great at first sight, but is diminished, as Worm correctly remarks, on closer consideration.

[16] Rep. 10, 612. e. [ii. p. 303].

agree that as to the man, who is beloved of the gods, whatever comes to him from the gods, will all be the best possible. Certainly we are then to think thus of the just man, that, if he happens to be in poverty, or in disease, or in any other of these seeming evils, these things issue to him in something good, either whilst alive or dead.'

Especially striking is the similarity between single Platonic and Mosaic commands and institutions, which explains in part the title of 'Atticising Moses,' which was given to Plato. The abuse of the Divine name, and invoking God with a falsehood, are forbidden by the Platonic as by the Mosaic laws.[17] Every one—so prescribe the Laws,[18] must honour his parents in word and deed. The Fifth Commandment occurs, connected with its religious motive, in the 11th book of the Laws; 'Let not then any one, whose father or mother, or the fathers or mothers of these, lie in his house, like a deposit, worn down with old age, ever conceive, that while he has such a possession at his hearth and in his house, there will be ever a statue more powerful, if only the possessor ministers to it in a proper manner.'[19] Like Moses, Plato also forbids most strictly private altars and private divine worship; and even, for the same reasons, because private worship endangers both the purity of the public religion and the firmness of political unity.[20] No Greek was permitted to hold a Greek in slavery. So the Israelities were to let the Hebrew servant go free in the seventh year.[21] The displacing of landmarks is forbidden as expressly as in the Pentateuch;[22] thieves are required to restore the stolen property;[23] children are not to

[17] Exod. xx. 7; Legg. 11, 916, e. 917, b. [v. p. 462–3].

[18] Lev. xix. 32; Legg. 9, 879, c. [v. p. 397–8].

[19] Legg. 11, 931, d. [v. p. 487].

[20] Legg. 10, 909, d. [v. p. 453] Cf. Lev. xvii. 1–9; Deut. xii. 13, xvi. 5.

[21] Rep. 5, 469, c. [ii. p. 469]. Cf. Euseb. Praep. ev. 12, 37.

[22] Legg. 8, 842, e. [v. p. 337]. Cf. Deut. xix. 14; Euseb. Praep. Ev. 12, 38.

[23] Legg. 9, 864, d, e. [v. p. 371] Cf. Exod. xxii. 1, 2; Euseb. Pr. ev. 12,

expiate the transgressions of their parents ;[24] domestic animals by which men have been killed, are to be killed in return, etc.[25] The prolix ordinances with regard to homicide and woundings, have generally very much in common with the Mosaic ordinances on this point.[26] Plato also, like Moses,[27] institutes religious festivals, which were to be at the same time national festivals ; and the church fathers have not allowed it to pass unnoticed,[28] that in most of his institutions he refers, like Moses, to *heavenly types*, or copies, and arranges according to these. They also call attention to the same division of the people into twelve tribes by Plato and Moses.[29]

Besides the passages in Plato which correspond to biblical texts of similar purport, the half of which can scarcely be mentioned here,—since our object does not require their complete enumeration,—there are not a few passages which, though not in single words and phrases, yet in their whole tone and spirit, have a Christian assonance.

How beautifully and how much in accordance with Christianity, is the divinely imparted grandeur and dignity of man presented in the Timæus? 'But with respect to the highest and most leading part of our souls, we should conceive as follows :—that the Deity assigned this to each as a dæmon,—that, namely, which we say, and say correctly too, resides at the summit of the body and raises us from earth to our cognate place in heaven :—for we are plants, not of earth, but

40. Luxdorph calls attention to the prohibition of usury by Plato as by Moses, Lev. xxv. 35 ; Legg. 5, 610 (ed. Fic.) [v. p. 182].

[24] Legg. 9, 856, e. [v. p. 358] Cf. Deut. xxiv. 16 ; Ezek. xviii. 19, 20.

[25] Legg. 9, 873, e. [v. p. 388] Cf. Ex. xxi. 18 ; Euseb. Praep. Ev. 12, 42.

[26] Legg. 9, 865 to the end [v. p. 372, etc.] Cf. Exod. xxi. 12, sq.

[27] Legg. 8, 828, sq. [v. p. 313] Cf. Lev. xxiii. ; Deut. xvi.

[28] Clem. Al. Strom. 4, p. 395, 5, 425 ; Euseb. 12, 19, etc.

[29] Legg. 6, 760, b. [v. p. 205]. Euseb. Praep. Ev. 12, 47. But in Attica this division existed as far back as the time of Cecrops (Strabo 9). A similar institution to the Levirate marriage occurs also in Plato, according to the Luxdorphiana. Deut. xxv. 5 ; Legg. 11 (679, ed. Fic.) 924, c. [v. p. 476].

heaven ;[30] and, from the same source whence the soul first arose, a divine nature raising aloft our head and root, directs our whole corporeal frame,' etc. Thoughts of this kind generally were not strange to the Greeks. Even Paul, as is well known, borrowed the beautiful sentence, 'for we are his offspring,' from a Greek poet.[31] (Acts xvii. 28).

Can the Christian thought that man must not be perplexed in his faith in Divine Providence and Goodness by single disturbing impressions, since the imperfection of the individual is the necessary condition of the perfection of the whole, be expressed more worthily and clearly than it is in the tenth book of the Laws?[32] 'Let us persuade the young man by our reasonings, that by him, who takes care of the universe, with a view to the safety and excellence of the whole, everything has been arranged, each part of which, as far as possible, suffers and acts what is suited to it; and that over each of these parts rulers have been appointed with reference even to the smallest portion of action and passion, having worked out an end to the ultimate distribution; of which parts, even thy portion, O miserable man, is one, and although it is very small, it is continually stretching its view to the whole. But this very thing has lain hid from you, that all generation is for the sake of the whole, in order that the existence of the universe may be happy in its life, and not for the sake of you; but that you exist for the sake of the universe,' etc. It might easily be shown further, if this were the place for it, that this thought is only the philosophical development of a heroic disposition natural to the antique life, in consequence of which, the negation of the individual as opposed to a great whole, as *e.g.*, the state, was accomplished without difficulty or hesitation. In our *modern* life individuality and personality have obtained a wholly different significance; hence also is so frequent among us the striv-

[30] Tim. 90, a. [ii. p. 406].

[31] Arat. Phaen. v. 5; Cleanth. hymn. in Jov. v. 5.

[32] Legg. 10, 903, b. [v. p. 440].

ing of the individual to subordinate the objective to himself, instead of subordinating himself to the objective.

What a profound thought is that, and with what a holy earnestness does Plato express it by the mouth of Socrates in the Theaetetus,[33] where he mentions the fatal blindness and confusion of those who suppose that it is marvellously well with them, while yet they are continually advancing towards perdition. ‘ *Theod.*—If, Socrates, you could persuade all men of what you say, as you have me, there would be more peace and less evil among men. *Socr.*—But it is not possible, Theodorus, that evil should be destroyed; for it is necessary that there should be always something contrary to good; nor can it be seated among the gods, but of necessity moves round this mortal nature and this region. Wherefore we ought to endeavour to fly hence thither as quickly as possible. But this flight consists in resembling God as much as possible; and this resemblance is the becoming just and holy with wisdom. But, my excellent friend, it is not very easy to persuade men, that not for the reasons for which most men say we ought to flee from vice and pursue virtue, ought we to study the one and not the other, namely, that a man may not seem to be vicious, but may seem to be good, for these are, as the saying is, the drivellings of old women, as it appears to me. But let us describe the truth as follows: God is never in any respect unjust, but as just as possible, and there is not anything that resembles Him more than the man amongst us who has likewise become as just as possible. And on this depends the true excellence of a man, and his nothingness and worthlessness: For the knowledge of this is wisdom and true virtue; but the not knowing it is manifest ignorance and vice. It is then by far the best not to allow him who acts unjustly, and who speaks or acts impiously, to excel by reason of his wickedness; for they delight in this reproach, and think they hear that they

[33] Theaet. 176, b. sq. [i. p. 411].

are not valueless, mere burdens on the earth, but men such as they ought to be, who will be safe in a city. The truth, therefore, must be spoken, that they are so much the more what they think that they are not, from not thinking that they are such. For they are ignorant of the punishment of injustice, of which they ought to be least of all ignorant: for it does not consist in what they imagine, stripes and death, which they sometimes suffer who do not commit injustice, but in that which it is impossible to avoid. *Theod.*—What do you mean? *Socr.*—Since, my friend, there are two models in the nature of things, one divine and most happy, the other ungodly and most miserable, they, not perceiving that this is the case, through stupidity and extreme folly unknown to themselves, become similar to the one by unjust actions, and dissimilar to the other. Wherefore they are punished by leading a life suited to that to which they are assimilated.[34] But if we should tell them, that unless they abandon this excellence, that place which is free from all evil will not receive them when dead, but here they will always lead a life resembling themselves, and there will associate with evil, these things, as being altogether shrewd and crafty, they will listen to as the extravagances of foolish men.' The Apostle, with similar meaning, addressed the beguiled disciples, 'Be not deceived—what a man soweth that shall he also reap' (Gal. vi. 7); and Fichte still more exactly expresses the thought of Plato, in the deeply significant words, 'What thou lovest, that thou art, and that thou livest.'

This reminds us of another powerful passage in Plato,[35] where he describes the doings and practices of those, to whom, as Paul says (Phil. iii. 19), 'their belly is their God;' or who are always asking: 'What shall we eat? and, What shall we drink?' etc. (Matt. vi. 31). 'Such then as are unacquainted with wisdom and virtue, and are always conversant in feastings, and

[34] Cf. the parallel passage. Legg. 5, 728, ab. [v. p. 154–5], and for the elucidation of the thought, Phaed. 83, d. [i. p. 87].

[35] Rep. 9, 586, a. sq. [ii. p. 276, etc].

things of that kind, are carried, as it appears, to the below, and back again to the middle; and there they wander during life: but as they never pass beyond this, they do not look towards the true above, and are not carried to it; nor are they ever really filled with real being; nor have they ever tasted solid and pure pleasure; but after the manner of brutes looking always downwards, bowed towards earth and their tables, they live feeding and coupling; and from a lust for such things, they kick and push at one another as with iron horns and hoofs; and perish through their own insatiety just like those who are filling with unreal being, that which is no real being, nor friendly to themselves.'

With this is connected the description of those in whom the *animal* part of man is strengthened and becomes predominant, while the *divine*, on the other hand, is stunted and subdued.[36] 'Let us form now the figure of a creature, various and many-headed, having all around heads of tame creatures, and of wild, and having power in itself of changing all these heads, and of breeding them out of itself. This is the work, said he, of a skilful modeller; however, as the formation is easier in reasoning than in wax, and such like, let it be formed. Let there be now one other figure of a lion, and one of a man; but let the first be by far the greatest, and the second be the second in bulk. These are easy, said he, and they are formed. Unite now these three in one, so that they may somehow co-exist. They are united, said he. Form now around them the external appearance of one of them, that of the man; so that to one who is not able to see what is within, but who perceives only the external covering, the man may appear one creature. It is formed all round, said he. Let us now tell him who asserts that it is profitable for this man to do injustice, but to do justice unprofitable, that he asserts nothing else, than that it is profitable for him to feast the multiform creature, and to make it

[36] Rep. 9, 588, c. sq. [ii. p. 279].

strong; and likewise the lion, and what respects the lion, whilst the man he kills with famine, and renders weak so as to be dragged whichever way either of those drag him; and that he will also find it advantageous never to accustom the one to live in harmony with the other, nor to make them friends, but suffer them to bite one another, and to fight and devour each other. He, said he, who commends the doing of injustice undoubtedly asserts these things. And does not he again, who says it is advantageous to act justly, say that he ought to do and to say such things by which the inner man shall come to have the most entire command of the man, and, as a tiller of the ground, should take care of the many-headed creature, cherishing the mild ones, and nourishing them, and hindering the wild ones from growing up, taking the nature of the lion as his ally, and, having a common care for all, make them friendly to one another, and to himself, and so nourish them? He who commends justice undoubtedly says such things as these. In all respects, then, he who commends justice would seem to speak the truth, and he who discommends it speaks nothing genuine; nor does he discommend with understanding what he discommends. Not at all, said he, as appears to me at least. Let us then in a mild manner persuade him (for it is not willingly he errs), asking him, O blessed man! Do we not say that the maxims of things beautiful and base become so upon such accounts as these? Those are good which make the brutal part of our nature most subject to man, or rather perhaps to that which is Divine, while those are evil which enslave the mild part of our nature to the brutal:—will he agree with us,—or how? He will, if he be advised by me, said he. Is there then any one, said I, whom it avails, from this reasoning, to take gold unjustly, supposing something of this kind to happen, if, while taking the money, he at the same time subjects the best part of himself to the worst? Or, if taking gold, he should enslave a son or daughter, and that even to savage or wicked men, shall we not say this would not avail him, not though he

should receive for it a prodigious sum? But if he enslaves the most divine part of himself to the most impious and most polluted part, without any pity, is he not wretched? And does he not take a gift of gold to his far more dreadful ruin, than Eriphyle did when she received the necklace for her husband's life?' Manifestly herein lies the Christian thought: 'What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' etc. (Matt. xvi. 26; Luke ix. 25).

How seductive injustice or sin is, in that it seems at the same time to ensure advantage and pleasure, and to be able, by cunning and various arts, to escape all punishment, is described in an exceedingly lively manner in the 2d book of the Republic.[37] Here and there in this representation, one fancies himself transported to the times of the Reformation, and listening to Luther's powerful polemics against monk- and priest-craft; for the account which Plato gives of the soothsayers and hypocrites who travelled through the country, as well as of their offerings and expiations, whereby they pretended to deliver the souls of the dead in suffering for their crimes from all punishment and pain, might be applied perfectly well to the quackish promises of the Indulgence-hawkers, and to the pretensions of the Catholic priests, that by their masses for souls they were able to liberate those who were doing penance in purgatory.

Not less evangelical and Christian is the sense and purpose of the parable, by which Plato seeks to set forth the *necessity* and the *difficulty* of turning men from the *pretence*, which they take for the *truth*, and of leading them to that which is *alone true*.[38] This passage deserves, in more than one respect, a closer consideration: it is as follows: 'After this then, said I, compare our nature as respects education, or the want thereof, to a condition such as follows:—Behold men, as it were, in an

[37] Rep. 2, 364, b. sq. [ii. p. 43]. Cf. Luther against the Indulgences. Ed. Walch xviii. 534. sq.

[38] Rep. 7, 514, a. sq. [ii. p. 202].

underground cave-like dwelling, having its entrance open towards the light and extending through the whole cave,—and within it persons, who, from childhood upwards, have had chains on their legs and their necks, so as, while abiding there, to have the power of looking forward only, but not to turn round their heads by reason of their chains, their light coming from a fire that burns above and afar off, and behind them; and between the fire and these in chains is a road above, along which one may see a little wall built, just as the stages of conjurers are built before the people in whose presence they show their tricks. I see, said he. Behold then, by the side of this little wall, men carrying all sorts of machines rising above the wall, and statues of men and other animals wrought in stone, wood, and other materials,[39] some of the bearers probably speaking, others proceeding in silence. You are proposing, said he, a most absurd comparison and absurd captives also. Such as resemble ourselves, said I;—for think you that such as these would have seen anything else of themselves or one another except the shadows that fall from the fire on the opposite side of the cave? How can they, said he, if indeed they be through life compelled to keep their heads unmoved! But what respecting the things carried by them:—is not this the same? Of course. If then they had been able to talk with each other, do you not suppose they would think it right to give names to what they saw before them? Of course they would. But if the prison had an echo on its opposite side, when any person present were to speak, think you they would imagine anything else addressed to them, except the shadow before them? No, by Zeus, not I, said he. At all events then, said I, such persons would deem truth to be nothing else but the shadows of exhibitions. Of course they would. Let us inquire then, said I, as to their liberation from captivity and their cure from insanity, such as it may be, and whether such will naturally fall to their lot:—

[39] Cf. Rep. 5, 476. b. sq. [ii. p. 163].

were a person let loose and obliged immediately to rise up, and turn round his neck and walk, and look upwards to the light, and doing all this, still feel pained, and be disabled by the dazzling, from seeing those things, of which he formerly saw the shadows:—what would he say, think you, if any one were to tell him, that he formerly saw mere empty visions, but now saw more correctly, as being nearer to the real thing, and turned towards what was more real, and then, specially pointing out to him every individual passing thing, should question him, and oblige him to answer respecting its nature:—think you not he would be embarrassed, and consider that what he before saw was truer than what was just exhibited? Quite so, said he. Therefore, even if a person should compel him to look to the light itself, would he not have pain in his eyes and shun it, and then, turning to what he really could behold, reckon these as really more clear than what had been previously pointed out? Just so, replied he. But if, said I, a person should forcibly drag him thence through a rugged and steep ascent without stopping, till he dragged him to the light of the sun, would he not while thus drawn be in pain and indignation, and when he came to the light, having his eyes dazzled with the splendour, be unable to behold even any one thing of what he had just alleged as true? No, he could not, at the moment at least, said he. He would require, at least then, to get some degree of practice, if he would see things above him:—and first, indeed, he would most easily perceive the shadows, and then the images of men and other animals in the water, and after that the things themselves;—and after this he would more easily behold the things in heaven, and heaven itself, by night, looking to the light of the stars and the moon, than after daylight to the sun and the light of the sun. How else? Last of all, then, methinks, he might be able to perceive and contemplate the nature of the sun, not as respects its images in water or any other place, but itself by itself in its own proper station. What then, when a man remembers his first habitation and the wisdom therein residing,

and his fellow-captives also,—think you not, that he would congratulate himself on the change and pity the rest? And consider this, said I, whether in the case of such an one going down and again sitting in the same place, his eyes would not be blinded in consequence of coming so suddenly from the sun? As for those shadows again, if he were compelled to split straws, and dispute about them with those persons who had been in constant captivity, while yet he was in darkness before the establishment of his sight (and his time of getting habituated would not be short), would he not excite ridicule; and would it not be said of him, that after having once ascended, he had come back with his eye-sight destroyed, and should not even try to ascend again; and as for any one that attempted to liberate him and lead him up, they ought to put him to death if they could get him into their hands?' To whom, in connection with this passage, do not occur those texts of the Bible which speak of the light of life, which shines into the darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not? and of the opening of the eyes, that men may turn from the darkness to the marvellous light of the Lord? John i. 8, iii. 19, viii. 12, xii. 46; Acts xxvi. 18, etc.

But the resemblance between Plato and the Bible is not confined to single passages and thoughts, it is also manifest, and this very generally, in their dogmatic and ethical systems. And it is this side of Plato's philosophy in particular, which has been treated of with a certain degree of completeness by some of the theologians mentioned in the first chapter. Here we can call attention only to the most important and striking relations between the Platonic and Christian systems.

As regards Plato's *theology*, it approximates very closely to the Christian theology, in the doctrines of the Existence, Essence, Name, Attributes, and Works of God; in the *ethical* part of his philosophical views, the homogeneousness with the Christian is often surprizingly manifest with respect to the doctrines of the nature and worth of the soul, the nature and

agency of sin, the nobility and nature of virtue, and of future existence and retribution after death.

A formal proof of the Divine existence the Bible does indeed nowhere institute; for good reasons, which unfortunately, so many teachers of religion and authors of books of religious instruction seem still unable to comprehend; but yet it indicates frequently and distinctly the data from which Christian theology (and for the completeness of its apparatus such demonstrations are certainly necessary) has since constructed its *cosmological* proof. (Heb. iii. 4. 'For every house is builded by some one, but He that built all things is God.' Ps. xix. 2, sq. civ. 2, sq.; Rom. i. 19, etc.). So Plato derives his principal reasons for conviction of the divine existence, from nature, and its regulation according to laws, and he especially concludes, from the constant mobility of nature, the necessity of an originating, moving, principle;[40] as in general, the idea of motion is of great significance in his philosophy. We should err, however, if we attributed the Platonic argumentation to any other than a popular aim and custom; Plato's belief in God rested no less than that of the biblical writers, on an intuitive certainty of His existence.

Plato also no more gives a definition of the Divine nature than does the Bible; for, according to him, we can only know the Divine essence by way of approximation and comparison.[41] The highest conceptions are, according to Plato, those of Existence and the Good; but even these are inadequate for the conception of the Godhead; the proper essence of God, as he expressly remarks,[42] lies still beyond them. Yet we come nearest

[40] Legg. 10. 893, b. sq. [v. p. 421-2]. Aristotle argues in a very similar manner, Phys. 7. 1. Met. 11. 6. etc.—cf. the beautiful passage in Cicero. N. D. 2, 2, 9. 21, and especially Qu. Tusc. 1. 28.

[41] The principal passage on the difficulty of knowing God is Tim. 28, c. [ii. p. 332]. No passage was so frequently cited by the church fathers, now with praise and now with censure, according as they understood it. (Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 20; John i. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16, and Exod. xxxiii. 11; Numb. xii. 8, etc.]

[42] Rep. 6, 509, b. [ii. p. 198.] So also it is said, Phileb. 22, c. [iv. p. 27]

the conception of the Godhead when we rightly apprehend the idea of the Good;[43] and if one would lay an intuition by the senses as the basis of a *living* comprehension of this, let him only behold the sun; the sun is the son and image of the Good.[44] In like manner, say the Scriptures, 'God is love' (1 John iv. 16), and 'the Father of lights' (Jas. i. 17). As Ritter justly remarks, would that Plato's pupils and the later Platonists had only remained true to their great master in this respect, and had imitated his wise abstinence from any attempt to discover the idea of God or goodness in its supra-substantial or supra-scientific unity! Believing that philosophy could and should proceed further on this point, they fell into many errors and extravagances. But although Plato renounced the idea of attaining and establishing an exhaustive scientific conception of God, yet he did not therefore consider the Deity a subject in nowise appertaining to philosophy, and to be entirely separated from science, as such. On the contrary, the Deity was really the starting-point and the goal of his philosophy; and it was not merely the pious disposition of Plato which led him to this, but also, and much more, the severely scientific spirit of his entire thinking. Science, in the true sense of the word, was to him inconceivable without the idea of the Godhead. The clear conception in the mind of this idea, he considered the basis and condition as well as the summit and perfection of all true knowing. Hence, also, he denominated Deity the Beginning and the End, and the Measure of all things.[45] His pupil

that the expression νοῦς is not wholly appropriate to the Godhead. Cf. Cic. Tusc. i. 27. Aristot. Met. 12, 8.

[43] Rep. 7, 517, b. [ii. p. 205.]

[44] Rep. 6, 506, e, 508, b [ii. pp. 195, 197]. Could Plato indicate the so-called extra- and supra-mundaneity of God, or His essential difference from the universe, more strongly and distinctly than he has done in these passages? Justin, indeed (Coh. ad. Gr. 10, d.), maintains that Plato attributed materiality to the Godhead, and held it to be a fiery substance; but in this he is plainly in error, as it is now generally acknowledged.

[45] Legg. 4, 715, e, 716, e [v. pp. 139, 140]. It was especially an axiom of Protagoras, that man is the measure of things.

Aristotle also, though less theologically disposed than he, made theology the highest and most important branch of all philosophical inquiry.[46]

To the nature of God pertains his (numerical and metaphysical) unity. That Plato was a Monotheist, and spoke of *gods* (in the plural) only in accommodation to the then reigning use of language, scarcely admits of a doubt. The most striking passages in proof of the acquaintance of heathen antiquity with Monotheism, have, for the most part, been long since and frequently brought forward; and it would be easy to show, if this were the place for it, that the expression *gods* is frequently taken now in a sense quite different from that in which it was understood at the time. This was pointed out even by Augustine;[47] and the church fathers generally, with the exception of a few fanatics, made no hesitation in declaring the educated heathens to be Monotheists. It is true, they supposed the heathen Monotheism to have been derived from a source, namely, the Bible, from which it could not have come, at least so immediately as they imagined.

It is a circumstance of great weight in favour of Plato's Monotheism, that he declares Monarchy to be the best, most perfect, and most rational form of political life.[48] For, in Plato's view, the state is a microcosm, a type and copy of the great universe ordered and ruled by God. But Plato also, in several passages of his works, speaks unambiguously enough of the unity of the Divine nature;[49] and, in particular, sets forth clearly the essential difference between the One, eternal, true God, and the

[46] God is the ground of all existence. Hence the first philosophy was called theology. Arist. Met. 6, 1; 11, 7. Cf. Euseb. Præp. Ev. 11, 3 sq.

[47] Aug. Civ. Dei. 4, 24. 31. Cf. Ib. 9, 23.

[48] Polit. 302, e. [iii. p. 261]. For in Plato scarcely a single expression is single and isolated. All have the closest reference to each other and the whole.

[49] Polit. 270, a. [iii. p. 211]. Tim. 31, a [ii. p. 335]. Cf. Euseb. Præp. Ev. 11, 13. Athen. leg. p. 284, b. c.

subordinate deities (intermediate between God and men), His assistants in the work of creation.[50]

In the names which Plato gives to the Godhead, he frequently coincides with biblical expressions. He frequently calls God, Father,[51] Father of the universe, Father of the gods; and it was in part this name, but still more the frequently recurring expressions, νοῦς and λόγος, whereby Plato designates the spiritual nature and activity of the Deity, which gave rise to the unfounded opinion of the church fathers, that the Platonic theology contained the first lines of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.[52] The name Creator also, which Plato frequently uses,[53] has been often misunderstood and taken in a more Christian sense than is warranted by the Platonic mode of thinking concerning God and the world. A somewhat more correct supposition is, that the idea which lies at the base of the significant name Jehovah, is expressed in the predicate of sole, uncreated, self-existence, which Plato attributes to the Supreme Being.[54] The Platonic titles, King, Ruler, Governor of the

[50] Tim. 28, a. 34, a. 39, d. sq. 41, a. etc. [ii. pp. 332, 338, 342, 345]. It cannot moreover be denied, that Plato did not keep his theology quite pure from admixture of the *physical* and *spiritual*. In his views of the stars, all sorts of old natural-philosophical views recur; and that his *demonology* was closely connected with the Egyptian, scarcely admits of a doubt. A new and *thorough* handling of the heathen demonology is urgently needed, even for New Testament exegesis. Cf. on other points of Plato's theology. Crat. 397, d. [iii. p. 309]. Legg. 10, 899, a. sq. 904, c. 909, e. [v. pp. 431, 442, 453]. Epin. 984, e. 977, a. 985, b. etc. [vi. pp. 22, 9, 23].

[51] Tim. 28, c. 37, c. 41. a. etc. [ii. pp. 332, 340, 345].

[52] Tim. 29, a. 47, e. [ii. pp. 333, 353]. Phil. 30, c, d. [iv. p. 41–2]. Epin. 986, c. etc. [vi. p. 26]. Eusebius (Præp. Ev. 11, 14. 20) maintains most decidedly that the Christian Trinity is intimated in Plato, Augustine more qualifiedly. Civ. Dei. 10, 29. Cf. Just. Apol. 1, p. 79, b. Clem. Al. Strom. 5, 436, d. Or. de princip. 1, 3, etc. The Fathers rest their view mainly on the mysterious passages in the Epp. 2, 312, e. Cf. 6, 323, d. [iv. pp. 482, 497].

[53] Tim. 28, c. 41, a. [ii. pp. 332, 345]. Soph. 265, b. c. [iii. p. 180].

[54] Tim. 37, e. 27, d. [ii. pp. 341, 332]. Cf. Exod. 3, 14, and Euseb. Præp. Ev. 11, 9.

World,[55] etc., seem, however, to accord most with the Christian names of God; but, we must not forget here, that even the Platonic idea of God had not entirely freed itself from that oppressive restriction[56] which, as Absolute Necessity or Iron Fate, exercised a destructive influence on the entire belief of heathen antiquity in the Divine existence; although Plato, in this respect also had struggled up to a greater elevation than any other heathen.

There is no slight resemblance between the biblical and Platonic theology with respect to the Divine attributes. They are nearly the same, except that Plato does not seem to mention the Divine Omnipresence and Holiness. God is *eternal*,[57] *i.e.*, according to Plato, without beginning and end, above and beyond all Becoming; all relation to time and space, all that is sensuous and successive is expressly denied to Him. He is the cause and source of all motion,[58] and all life, eternally moving Himself.[59] With supreme Power, He unites supreme Wisdom; His almighty will holds together the universe, which He has ordered in the wisest manner.[60] He is not merely

[55] Legg. 10, 904. a. Crat. 396. a. [v. p. 441-2, iii. p. 307].

[56] Cf. the passages Tim. 68. d, e. Polit. 270. a. sq. [ii. p. 379, iii. p. 211], and especially Epin. 982. b. [vi. p. 19].

[57] The principal passage is Tim. 27, d. Cf. Ib. 38, a. 52, a. [ii. pp. 332, 341, 358].

[58] Tim. 34. e. sq. [ii. p. 338]. Legg. 10, 894. c. [v. p. 421].

[59] With Aristotle, on the other hand, the *unmoved* causality of all movements is the chief conception of the Divine nature. Met. 12. 7; 14, 8.

[60] Tim. 68. d. [ii. p. 379]. Power and wisdom united with goodness, Legg. 10, 902. c. [v. p. 439]. The Plat. conception of Divine omnipotence is learned principally from Tim. 32, c. 33. a. [ii. p. 336]. God has bound all matter and all forces in one unity dissoluble only by Himself; the creative power, therefore, goes forth without resting, into the work of creation, but without being thereby exhausted, since the sum of all things remains included in and dependent on the willing-power of its author. Plato did not and could not have the conception of an *unlimited* omnipotence, as even Galen remarked. De us. part. 12, 14. Cf. besides on the Plat. doctrine of omnipotence, Tim. 41. a. [ii. p. 345], where the important intimation is given, that the mighty will of God is no less manifest in the preservation than in the creation of the world.

wise,[61] He is Omniscient, nothing escapes Him, nothing remains hidden from Him ;[62] while He surveys the whole, He sees also every individual. With the most perfect insight, which He possesses, is connected His integrity and veracity ; He is a God of truth, who hates falsehood, and to whom all desire of deception and shifting pretence remains eternally strange.[63] He is both just and benevolent.[64] He allows no wickedness to go unpunished, no virtue unrewarded.[65] His peculiar nature consists in His benevolence, which desires the welfare of All, does good to All, and is never the cause of evil ;[66] and since true and eternal Goodness ever has in itself complete sufficiency, the purest happiness must ever dwell with the Godhead.[67] This attribute of blessedness excludes not only all pain and longing, but also every affection and passion. In this Plato's theological terminology differs from that of the Bible. The Bible does not avoid speaking of a divine repentance, anger,[68] etc. ; but Plato will nowhere tolerate such conceptions and expressions, conceiving them unworthy of the Godhead and injurious to true piety ; and their frequent occurrence in the poets was one of the chief reasons of his severity towards this class of persons.[69] The reverence and adoration of God which Plato requires, corresponds with the worthy conception which he had formed of the Godhead. He requires, we might say, a worship of God in spirit and in truth (John iv. 24) ; that is, with pious feeling and upright conduct. God is not

[61] Phaedr. 278. d. [i. p. 359]. Parm. 134. c. [iii. p. 415], etc.

[62] Legg. 10, 901. d. [v. p. 438]. Ps. xciv. 6.

[63] Rep. 2, 382. e. [ii. p. 64]. Cf. Rom. xv. 8 ; Tit. i. 2 ; Heb. vi. 18 ; Deut. xxxii. 4 ; Jer. x. 10, etc.

[64] Phaed. 80. d. Prot. 344, c. [i. pp. 83, 274]. Cf. Luke xviii. 19.

[65] Legg. 4, 716. a. 6, 757. b. [v. pp. 139, 200].

[66] Rep. 2, 379. c. [ii. p. 60], etc. Cf. James i. 13, 17.

[67] Phil. 20. d. 33. b. [iv. pp. 23, 47]. Phaed. 247. a. [i. p. 323], etc.

[68] Gen. vi. 6 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 ; Jer. xviii. 8, 10 ; Exod. xxii. 24 ; John iii. 36, etc.

[69] Rep. 2, 380. a. sq. [ii. p. 61].

honoured by ceremonies, prayers, and sacrifices,[70] the profligate may offer these without being able to bribe God with them, or to obtain His favour by flattery; but by an earnest striving after virtue, and by pure and deep piety.[71] When we pray, we must never forget that God knows what is for our peace better than we do; and hence, we must always leave it to His wisdom what, as the best for us, He will grant or deny.

The teaching of Plato concerning the works of God affords many points of comparison with Christian doctrine; fewer, however, with reference particularly to the Creation,[72] than to the preservation and government of the world. It has been often but incorrectly supposed, that the dogma of Creation out of nothing is to be found in Plato. The principal occasion for this error was given by the well-known Platonic formula of the 'non-existent,' whereby he designated everything material, to which he allowed a constantly changeable *becoming*, but no real *being*. On the other hand, however, those have gone too far who attribute to Plato the crude thought that matter is equally eternal with God, and, as it were, opposite to Him. Plato holds firmly, with almost all philosophers, both that the world exists by God, and that the existence of God cannot be conceived of without the existence of the world. Since the world is the work of God, a Being without envy and most perfect, it must also necessarily possess perfect beauty and order; it is the successful copy of the most glorious original in the Divine Mind;[73] Plato expresses himself just as does Moses, concerning the sublime satisfaction with which the Creator beholds His completed work.[74]

[70] Rep. 2, 364. c. sq. [ii. p. 43]. Alc. 2, 149. e. sq. [iv. p. 395–6]. Cf. Isa. i. 11, 16; Ps. l. 8, sq.; Mic. vi. 6, etc.

[71] Euthyphr. 7. a. sq. 8, d. 12. e. sq. [i. pp. 464, 466, 471]. Cf. Luke i. 75; Acts ii. 27; 1 Tim. ii. 8, etc.

[72] Eusebius (Praep. Ev. 11, 29) especially maintains the agreement of the Christian and Platonic doctrines concerning the creation of the world, and bases this agreement principally on Tim. 28. c. [ii. p. 332]. Cf. Heb. iii. 4.

[73] Tim. 92. c. [ii. p. 409]. Cf. Phil. 28, c, d. etc. [iv. p. 38].

[74] Tim. 37. c. [ii. p. 340]. Gen. i. 31.

In the world itself, since it is a divine and perfect image, there is no ground for its destruction or annihilation;[75] though such might be conceived of as proceeding from God, for only the original author of this harmonious connection of all parts in one great whole, could dissolve it again. But what should move Him to this? He is, by virtue of His wisdom and goodness, too much a friend of all that is beautiful and excellent not to desire the eternal continuance of His work. But God does not merely preserve the world, He regulates and governs it also. An all-comprehending Providence[76] disposes and watches over the universe; it knows no difference between great and small; even that which is apparently the *smallest* is not too minute and worthless in its view, and it cares not less for this than for the great and the whole.[77] The existence of moral and natural evil in the world proves nothing against the Divine Providence and Goodness;[78] for the most of so-called evils dissolve on closer ex-

[75] Tim. 33. a. 38. c. [ii. pp. 336, 341]. Plato taught, in opposition to other and subsequent opinions, that there is only *one* world. Cf. particularly Plutarch de orac. dei p. 423, sq. and Orig. de princip. 2, 3. The chief ground for the *imperishability* of the world lies, according to Plato, in the mundane soul, as its immortal principle. It was Plato's thorough conviction, not only that every soul exists prior to the body, but also that this body is its image and product. Wholly divergent as this doctrine appears from the Christian view of the world, there is yet one point which approximates to it. The Platonic mundane soul takes the place of the Christian omnipresence of God. This conception insinuated itself, moreover, into the Christian church. *Baumgarten-Crusius*, D. G. 915.

[76] πρόνοια, Tim. 30. b. [ii. p. 334] (Wisdom 12, 13) introduced mainly by Plato into religious use. Yet Cf. Herod, 3, 202. Phaed. 62, b. [i. p. 59]. Cf. Legg. 4, 709, b. [v. p. 128]. Not ἀλόγου δύναμις rules the world, but φρόνησις: Phil. 28. d. sq. [iv. p. 38].

[77] Legg. 10, 900. c. [v. p. 434]. Cf. Matt. x. 30.

[78] The chief passages concerning Plato's doctrine of *Moral Evil* are Tim. 47. d, e. 69. a. sq. [ii. pp. 353, 379]. Polit. 268, e. 269, b. 273, d. [iii. pp. 208, 209, 217]. Legg. 10, 896. e. 903, b. [v. pp. 426, 440. Plato designates *matter* the seat of evil; it comes neither from God, nor is in Being, for true Being is as such also the Good (Cf. August. Conf. 7, 18. 19) but it *unfolds itself* in the Becoming, and inheres, as a necessary limitation, in the creature. Similarly Leibnitz in his *Theodicée*.

amination into mere seeming; and the bad will no more trouble or mislead him, who has raised himself to the heights of true perception, and from thence has comprehended its *necessity* and *inevitableness*, as well as its beneficial agency in enhancing and involuntarily promoting the good.[79]

With the consideration of the Platonic theology is intimately connected the question: Whence did Plato obtain his insight into the Divine existence and works? Was it purely from himself and his own reason? This he nowhere says, but rather the contrary. All religious convictions he traces back to a double origin,—tradition, and life with God. Whenever he lays down a doctrine of faith, he refers either to ancient, sacred traditions,[80] —which he speaks of with reverence as authentic sources of theology,—or he derives it from the ante-temporal existence of the soul, when the soul, being with God, knew intuitively the True and Eternal.[81] What the prophets of the Old Testament are to the Apostles and Evangelists, that the ancient inspired singers are to Plato; he quotes them often in his writings,[82] and lays the same weight on such sayings of the poets and oracles as, in the New Testament, is laid on Moses and the prophets. It is well known how fond he is of using myths for clothing his religious ideas; to him, however, the *mythical* and the *fictitious* are by no means synonymous terms. He frequently assures us, with entire earnestness, that the contents of this or that myth are the deepest and purest truth.[83] We must not then at all suppose in Plato an *à priori* production and construing of religious perceptions. Far from yielding up any of the granted

[79] Legg. 10, 906. a. sq. [v. p. 445]. Theaet. 176. a. sq. [i. p. 411]. Rep. 10, 613. a. [ii. p. 304].

[80] Legg. 4, 715. [v. p. 139]. Phaed. 70. c. [i. p. 69]. Conv. 177. a. [iii. 483]. Tim. 29. d. [ii. p. 333], etc. So also Aristotle (e.g. De coelo. 6).

[81] Principal passage, Phaedr. 247. d. sq. [i. p. 323].

[82] Rep. 2, 366. b. Tim. 40. e. [ii. pp. 46, 345]. Cf. Men. 81. b. [iii. p. 19]. Phil. 16. c. [iv. p. 14].

[83] Gorg. 523. a. [i. p. 227], etc.

and *positive* value of religious truth, he reflects on it constantly and diligently. The *material* part of religion is to him something *objective* throughout, arising from without and from above, namely, from life and history, and from God and His eternal, invisible world. In accordance with this, we cannot refuse to place Plato, in this respect also, by the side of the biblical authors and Christian theologians, in that he founds his theology, not on the *subjectivity* of individual thinking, but on the *objectivity* of the Divine existence and operation, as presented to the perceptive faculty, or in revelation. There are three things principally in the consideration of his theology, which involuntarily call forth this thought: (1.) *The position and significance of the idea of God* in his philosophy; since he not only makes the whole of human knowledge, and all truth in general, dependent on this, and maintains that all knowledge springs from the original source of wisdom,[84] but desires to have the eternal existence of this idea recognised and comprehended in its living fulness and absolute sublimity, thus entirely otherwise than, *e.g.* by Aristotle, with whom the Godhead receives the highest place, not so much for His own sake, as rather in consequence of and as required by scientific thinking: (2.) *The demonstrable connection of the Platonic religious doctrines with the original stock of the religions of antiquity;* since, when we inquire into the origin of this or that religious idea of Plato, it is assigned not to his subjective thinking as wholly independent of his predecessors, but just the reverse, to the communications and influences of the past; and however far we pursue this inquiry, we never come to a single subjective mind as the originator of such views, but to the general spirit of the world's history, whether this be regarded as, so to speak, a spiritual atmosphere, breathed by nations and individuals, or as an original revelation: (3.) *The elements*, which are manifest in Plato's writings, *of a kind of theory of inspiration;* since Plato not only speaks often and willingly of the original heavenly

[84] Rep. 6, 505. a. 508, e. 7, 517. bc 532, a. [ii. pp. 193, 198, 205, 222]. Phaed. 97. c. [i. p. 103], etc.

light,[85] and its beams which enlighten the spirit of men, but also repeatedly and directly maintains that God discloses and vouchsafes the highest ideas only to the highest inspiration.[86] From these intimations it will be easy to conclude how near or how remote Plato's belief in a revelation is from the Christian faith in these three particulars.

Plato based the ethical part of his teaching, like a true follower of Socrates, on Psychology. For Socrates held compliance with that solemn exhortation: *know thyself!* to be the chief task of human life.[87]

The Scriptures render prominent a certain threefold division of human nature; they distinguish between mind, soul, and flesh, or sense. We may compare this biblical trichotomy with that of Plato. He also considers the nature of man as consisting of a purely spiritual and a purely sensuous vital principle; and the two are connected together by a *mediating* soul-life,[88] as he generally, when he meets with antagonisms in nature and mind, designates ideas or powers which are adapted to undertake the office of mediator. But the comparison between the Platonic and biblical trichotomy must not be extended too far, if it is to remain allowable or practicable. It is certain that Plato, like the Bible, declares decidedly against all materialism.[89] In his writings also, as in those of the Bible, the

[85] Rep. 6, 507. e. sq. [ii. p. 197].

[86] Phil. 63. e. [iv. p. 103]. Phaedr. 244, a. sq. [i. p. 319]. Men. 99. d. [iii. p. 47], etc. An apparent depreciation of inspiration, Tim. 71. e. 86, b. [ii. pp. 383, 402]. But Plato distinguishes a higher and an inferior mania. Phaedr. 265. a, b. [i. p. 343–4]. (The well-known passage Tim. 72. a. sq. [ii. p. 384] has been frequently used to explain 1 Cor. xiv. 3, sq. An unmistakeable Platonic thought is expressed in 2 Pet. i. 19).

[87] Patricius and others make the dialogue Alcib. 1, the foundation of all the rest, because it treats of self-knowledge.

[88] Tim. 69. c. sq. 72. d. sq. Rep. 4, 431. d. sq. 435. b. sq. [ii. pp. 380, 384; 115, 119]. The irrational or sensuous soul has two principal faculties, the irascible or combative, and the covetous. The higher part of the soul is designated the rational part.

[89] See the beautiful passage, Soph. 246. d. sq. [iii. p. 149].

opposition is everywhere prominent between the visible and the invisible, the sensuous and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal;[90] and he ever subordinates the former to the latter, and attributes to this the higher rank and value,[91] but desires, as little as the Bible, a complete extirpation and annihilation of the other. For even the sensuous in the Platonic and Christian view, has value and significance, when it is restricted within its proper limits, and does not attain the preponderance. Plato, like Christ, loves to unite the *higher* to the *lower*, and to rise in his dialogues and inquiries from the sensuous to the spiritual.[92]

The soul of man, according to the Platonic and Christian doctrine, is in its nature different throughout from the sensuous and material; it belongs to the higher kingdom of spiritual and eternal entities.[93] In his view of the *absolutely eternal* life of the soul, its pre-existence, its transmigration after the death of the body, etc.,[94] Plato, indeed, diverges widely from the expressions and intimations of the Scriptures; but when he calls the body a *grave* of the soul,[95] when he traces the soul's condition of being sunk in the body to its own fault, and represents this as a kind of apostacy, he furnishes herein points of analogy

[90] Phaed. 79. a. sq. [i. p. 81]. Cf. Polit. 285. e. sq. [iii. p. 235]. Tim. 52. a. [ii. p. 358], etc.

[91] Legg. 5. 727. d. sq. [v. p. 154]. Cf. Matt. vi. 19, 25, sq.

[92] See ex. gr. Conv. 210. a. sq. [iii. p. 550].

[93] According to Plato, the soul belongs to the class of Ideas, *i.e.*, of things truly existent. Phaed. 77. a. [i. p. 78–9]. He assumes also, a fixed number of souls, which can be neither increased nor diminished, Rep. 10, 611. a. [ii. p. 301]. This eternity of the soul in and of itself was exceedingly offensive to the church fathers: Souls, said they, are not immortal by birth, but by the grace of God. Just., Dial. c. Tryph. 107. b. But especially Arnob. adv. G. 2, 14–19.

[94] The transmigration of souls is founded, in the case of Plato as in that of the Jews, on the conviction of the necessity of an expiation and purification of the soul, which has become material by sensual lusts. Phaed. 81. c. sq. [i. p. 84]. Tim. 42. b. c. [ii. p. 346–7].

[95] Crat. 400. c. [iii. p. 315]. Gorg. 492. e. [i. p. 191].

to the expressions and descriptions of the Bible; and thus, when an intimation of the Fall had been found in his writings, it was not difficult for the Christian friends of Plato to discover and call attention to a Paradise there also.[96]

Of the *worth* of the soul-life Plato speaks unquestionably in a biblical and Christian manner. He, like the Gospel, designates care for the salvation of the soul the highest and most important of human concerns. And he renders it as expressly prominent as does the Bible, that this care is so much the more necessary, the greater and more various are the dangers which threaten the soul-life from the *world*, and the *sin* reigning therein.[97]

It has been often maintained and also disputed, that Christianity can only be rightly comprehended on the basis of a true conception of sin; because, by regarding the nature and working of sin, both the necessity of Christianity and its value and purpose will be correctly recognized. However this may be, this is certain, no book in the world speaks so much of sin as the Bible, and nowhere, on the whole, is it spoken of so little as in the heathen authors.[98] In this regard Plato is an exception. A tolerably complete doctrinal statement might be gathered from his works of the origin, nature, and effects of sin, and his doctrine appears to diverge but little from the Christian.

Sin or wickedness consists in deviation from the Divine law,[99] in disobedience to the higher and better, to the rational

[96] Euseb. Praep. Ev. 12, 11. Plat. Conv. 203. b. [iii. p. 534].

[97] See the excellent passage on the corrupting influence of the world. Rep. 6, 492. a. sq. [ii. p. 178–9]. Cf. Alc. 1, 132. a. [iv. p. 364].

[98] The heathen sacrificial worship springs by no means exclusively or chiefly from a feeling of sin. That the Christian doctrine of sin was entirely strange to classic heathendom is clearly evinced by its violent and sarcastic polemics against 'the poor sin-religion.' See e. g. Orig. c. Cels. 3. p. 486. sq. (Ed. Delar).

[99] The fundamental idea of ἁμαρτάνειν among the heathen is physical, viz., to leave the right direction, to miss a mark, to make a failure; then metaphysical, to wander; hence ἁμαρτια—error (of the understanding). See

spirit, and in renouncing the more noble in favour of the low and base. There are scarcely any traces in him and some other classic authors,[100] that they accept the doctrine of *innate depravity;* on the contrary, the goodness of human nature was a prevalent presupposition of heathen antiquity. Plato designates as chief sources of sin and crimes, in the Gospel sense, bad education,[101] riches and luxury,[102] error and lack of judgment, which is blinded by appearances, and confounds the agreeable with the good,[103] self-love and selfishness,[104] seduction and bad company, unbelief, pride, and godlessness.[105] It is to his honour that he has fully recognized and clearly expressed the close connection between unbelief and immorality. The effects of sin he considers as afflictive as corrupting; for he says, that sin renders the soul sick and ugly,[106] and reduces it

especially Arist. Eth. Nio. 2, 6. Error (intellectual) is also the predominant signification in the Platonic ἁμαρτάνειν. Rep. 5, 477. e. [ii. p. 165], Euthyd. 281. c. [iii. p. 64]. Alc. 2, 146. a. [iv. p. 388–9], etc. The following passages are of special importance with regard to the Plat. doctrine of sin. Rep. 7, 519. a. sq. [ii. p. 207]. Cf. Legg. 9, 863. e. sq. [v. p. 370–1], where sin is represented as that relation between the higher and lower impulses of the soul, which is opposed to nature and to God; that, namely, when the latter rule and the former obey. Rep. 1, 351. d. sq. [ii. p. 29, 30]. Cf. Legg. 1, 644, a. sq. [v. p. 31] where sin appears as an inward want of harmony, or disunion, which is manifest outwardly in civil discords, wars, etc.

[100] Plato traces most sins to the influence of the body on the soul. Phaed. 66. c. sq. [i. p. 65]. By this may be explained his ordinances, so offensive to us, respecting the procreation of children. Rep. 5, 460. b. sq. [ii. p. 144].

[101] Tim. 86. e. [ii. p. 402]. Legg. 6, 766. a. [v. p. 215].

[102] Legg. 4, 716. a. [v. p. 139].

[103] Men. 77. c. [iii. p. 14]. Cf. Gorg. 466. d. [i. p. 159], etc.

[104] Legg. 5, 731. c. [v. p. 160]. The counterpart to this passage is Arist. Eth. Nio. 9, 8. Cf. Cic. fin. 5, 9.

[105] Legg. 10, 908. c. Cf. Ib. 9, 863. e. [v. pp. 451, 370–1]. *Grotefend* is wrong when he says, Plato nowhere connects faith with virtue, Comm. p. 48.

[106] Rep. 4, 444. c. [ii. p. 130]. The soul of the profligate is full of scars. Gorg. 524. d. [i. p. 229].

to slavery;[107] it robs man of his fairest joys here[108] and of heavenly bliss hereafter; the impure and unholy cannot come to God;[109] whoever has not here, in his earthly life, become free from sin, must suffer the penalty for it after death.[110] The best cure for the sin-sickness of the soul is found in a good education, in punitive justice,[111] and in philosophy.[112]

It might be expected that with such views of the world and of life, and with the holy earnestness of his theological principles which pervades his entire philosophy, Plato would form no other than an exceedingly worthy and elevated doctrine of virtue. And this is in fact the case. The Christian beauty of his Ethics proper, scarcely needs to be specially demonstrated or discussed, since it has long enjoyed universal recognition as the fairest flower of the Socratic school.

Virtue, says Plato, is likeness to God,[113] hence the virtuous are God's friends and children.[114] But virtue is also health,

[107] Rep. 9, 579. d. sq. [ii. p. 268]. Cf. John viii. 34. See further, Phaed. 83. d. [i. p. 87]. Legg. 9, 863. e. [v. p. 370–1]. Cf. Rom. vi. 19, sq. For an incomparable description, applicable to our own times, of the unbounded lawlessness, which is taken for freedom, but really leads to most disgraceful bondage and tyranny, see Rep. 8, 562. b. sq. [ii. p. 252]. Cf. on the other hand Legg. 6, 762. e. [v. p. 210]. Ep. 7, 354. e. [iv. p. 543] with 1 Cor. vii. 22; Eph. vi. 6, etc.

[108] Rep. 9, 586. b. [ii. p. 277].

[109] Phaed. 69. c. [i. p. 68] where is also a parallel to Matt. xxii. 14.

[110] Gorg. 525. b. [i. p. 229]. Hence these also are called expiable sins. Cf. Phaed. 113. e. [i. p. 122–3].

[111] Gorg. 476. e. 478. d. 525. b. [i. pp. 172–3, 175, 225]. Cf. Heb. xii. 5, sq. Hence also the earnest warning against the desire of transferring all guilt from one's self to others and to circumstances. See the beautiful passage, Legg. 5, 727. c. [v. p. 154]. Cf. 1 John i. 8.

[112] Tim. 87. b. sq. [ii. p. 403]. Soph. 230. a. sq. [iii. p. 125].

[113] Theaet. 176. a. [i. p. 411]. Human life the most beautiful picture. Rep. 6, 501. b. c. [ii. p. 189]. Cf. Matt. v. 48.

[114] Legg. 4, 716. c. 5, 739. c. Cf. 12, 941. b. c. [v. pp. 140, 175, 499]. This expression designates, for the most part, in Plato Heroes or sacred poets. Tim. 40. e. [ii. p. 345].

beauty,[115] and harmony of soul,[116] yea, it is the true life of the soul itself. When Plato describes the virtuous life of the truly moral man, we almost think we behold that which the New Testament, and especially John, calls the eternal life, the life of the soul in and with God.[117]

Virtue is fundamentally but *one;* yet it may be divided, according to Plato, into four main branches.—Courage, Moderation, Justice, Wisdom.[118] Plato frequently mentions also a fifth, Piety; and this as indeed the most excellent of all.[119] But he usually places true Wisdom highest, and speaks of it as Christ does of the precious pearl, to gain which, a man must give up all else.[120] The strife of man with himself Plato describes and requires as do the Lord's Apostles,[121] and his re-

[115] Rep. 4, 444. e. Cf. 1, 353. b. c. [ii. p. 130, and 31–2]. Taken somewhat differently Men. 78. b. [iii. p. 15].

[116] Gorg. 482. b. [i. p. 180]. This harmony arises from joyful obedience to the rational, divine part of the soul. Legg. 3, 689. d. [v. p. 99]. Virtue, *i.q.*, harmony, the Pythagorean definition. Arist. Eth. Nio. 2, 6. Diog. La. 8, 33. Hence the high estimation of music by the Pythagoreans and Platonists. Plato considered music the best means of education.

[117] Rep. 6, 490. b. [ii. p. 176]. The description which Plato here and elsewhere, Rep. 6, 485. d. [ii. p. 171], gives of the nature, way of thinking, and life of the true philosopher, corresponds, in many points, with the descriptions by which the church fathers sought to portray the life and character of a true Christian. Cf. Clem. Al. Paed. 1. p. 101. Just. M. ad. Diogn. 326, etc. Athen. Leg. p. 288, etc. Not the mental acquirements, but the sentiments, are the essential thing with Plato; he loves to identify true philosophy and true nobility of soul. Cf. the beautiful passage in Plot. 6, 9, 9, with John xvii. 3, etc.

[118] Rep. 4, 442. c.; 443. d. [ii. pp. 128–9]. Cf. Lach. 199. b. sq. Charm. 164. d. [iv. pp. 177, 128]. Theaet. 176. c. [i. p. 411].

[119] Prot. 324. e. 329. c. [i. pp. 253, 258]. Epin. 989. b. [vi. p. 30]. Cf. also in respect of Plato's piety, the interesting religious ordinances concerning blasphemy, etc. Legg. 10, 907. d. sq. (9, 854, e. 10, 885. b.) [v. pp. 450, 354, 405]. Cf. Levit. xxiv. 14, sq.

[120] Matt. xiii. 46. Phaed. 69. a, b. Piot. 352. bc. [i. pp. 68, 283]. Cf. Wisdom 6, 12, sq.; 7, 17, sq.

[121] Legg. 1, 626. e. Cf. 6. 47. e. [v. pp. 4, 37]. Euseb. Pr. Ev. 12, 27; Prov. xvi. 32; Rom. vii. 22. Cf. also Hor. Epist. 1, 2, 62.

quirement that man love and strive after the good purely for its own sake, and not for any advantage it may peradventure procure, can, with equal reason, be denominated no other than Christian.[122] He also demands an immutable fidelity to the good, even when this fidelity threatens to bring danger and death.[123] For it is worse to commit injustice than to suffer,[124] wherefore also we must never return evil for evil.[125] In accordance with this view, Plato gives, in several passages of his writings, a description of a just man suffering, which corresponds, almost line for line, with the picture which the Gospels draw of the persecution and condemnation of the Saviour; even the blow on the cheek, which the noble Sufferer had to endure from the rude soldiers, is not forgotten.[126] Plato was constrained, by his whole way of thinking, to regard the free-will of man as the author of all moral action, and there are not wanting passages which intimate this,[127] although he has nowhere developed and presented a proper doctrine of the freedom of the will. There is one remarkable passage in the Meno, where, in accordance with biblical principles, he appears to

[122] See the beautiful passage against those who recommend virtue for the sake of its rewards. Rep. 2, 362. e. sq. [ii. p. 41]. Gorg. 500. a. [i. p. 201].

[123] Apol. 30. b. [i. p. 17]. Rep. 2, 364. d. [ii. p. 43]. Cf. Matt. vii. 13.

[124] Gorg. 479. e. Cf. 507, c. [i. pp. 177, 210]. Rep. 4, 445. a, b. [ii. p. 130], etc.

[125] Crito 49. c. [i. p. 38]. Cf. Rom. xii. 17; Euseb. Praep. Ev. 13, 7. Celsus maintained that Jesus took His doctrine of suffering injustice from Plato. Orig. c. Cels. 7, p. 735.

[126] Gorg. 486, a. sq. [i. p. 183-4]. Rep. 2, 361. b. sq. [ii. p. 40]. Cf. Euseb. Praep. Ev. 12, 10. (Heb. xi. 37).

[127] Legg. 10, 904, b. [v. p. 442]. Cf. Rep. 10, 617. e. [ii. p. 308]. Remarkable is the frequently recurring thought in Plato, 'that no one is voluntarily bad.' Tim. 87. b. [ii. p. 403]. Men. 78. b. [iii. p. 15]. Prot. 145. d. [i. p. 275?] It is plain what prejudicial consequences to the doctrine of freedom may be drawn from this thought, and these Aristotle does not fail to censure. Eth. Nio. 3, 1.

represent virtue as the work of Divine grace.[128] He was unquestionably convinced that all the beauty and grandeur of earthly life must be traced back to the Divine control and volition, and for this reason laboured to represent his State as founded on God, and his laws as proceeding from God.[129] That he not only described and preached virtue, but also himself practised it, and left to his neighbours the lofty model of a pure moral life, is a statement which no malicious calumnies of his enemies are sufficient to cast a doubt upon.

Virtue has indeed, as Plato teaches, its reward in itself,[130] and we can hardly blame his ethical doctrine of Eudæmonism; yet he does not omit to mention also the blessed consequences which are infallibly connected with the exercise of virtue in this, as in the future life.[131] Plato teaches and maintains not merely the immortality of the soul, but also recompense beyond the grave, and in degrees proportioned to guilt and merit;[132] and he does not omit to call attention to the terribleness of the thought of a future judgment, especially in the last hours of life.[133] It is well known what respect and influence the Platonic eschatology has had in the Christian Church, on account of its resemblance to the Christian doc-

[128] Men. 99. e. [iii. p. 47]. Clem. Al. (Strom. 5, p. 429. b.) takes the passage in all earnestness in a Biblico-Christian sense. Another view is that of Justin M. Coh. p. 31. a.

[129] Legg. 4, 712. b.; 713. a.; 1, 624. a. [v. pp. 133–4 and 1].

[130] Rep. 10, 612. a. [ii. p. 302]. Cf. Gorg. 507. c. [i. p. 210].

[131] Rep. 1. 351. a. [ii. p. 29], etc.

[132] Legg. 12, 959. b. [v. p. 529–30], where the same phrase occurs as in Rom. xiv. 12. On the future judgment see Gorg. 526. b. sq. [i. p. 231]. Rep. 10, 614. c. [ii. p. 305]. Cf. Matt. xxv. 33.

[133] Rep. i. 330. d. [ii. p. 6]. It seems as if Plato wished to portray, in this passage, the unrest of the awakened conscience. *Grotefend*, however, maintains that Plato teaches nothing of the conscience, not even in Rep. 9, 578. a. sq. [ii. p. 266–7]. It would certainly be erroneous to find an intimation of it in the Daemon of Socrates, Theag. 128, d. [iv. p. 403]; but it can hardly be denied that the heathen generally, and Plato in particular, correctly apprehended and described the conscience.

trine. His proofs for our continued existence after death,[134] certainly do not proceed from Christian thoughts and truths; but the *tone* and *spirit* in which he everywhere treats of the Athanasy of the true Self in man, and the *weight* which this doctrine has in and upon his whole system, may, without doubt, be designated as truly Christian. His Phaedo will ever be sure of the deep impression which it has always made on susceptible minds.

Besides these resemblances between Platonic and Christian thoughts and doctrines, many others strike us on a continued consideration, which exist principally between some historical circumstances, by which we see the Gospel and Platonism accompanied. We may indicate first, the similarity which seems to be presented with respect to the immediate celestial origin of Plato, and the incarnation of our Saviour. But the Christian Church from the first, has rightly declined most decidedly to make comparisons of this sort;[135] and in the most modern times it has been fully proved, that not even the incarnations of the Indian mythology can be brought into comparison with the Gospel history of the birth of Jesus,

[134] There are three main thoughts from which Plato develops his proof of immortality: 1. The *physical* and *moral indestructibility of the substance of the soul*. The soul has being and goodness by its very essence; and goodness is here equivalent to indestructibility. The bad is related to the soul; not as the rust to the iron, which it corrodes, but only as the slime and sand which covers a shell in the sea, and which may be removed. Rep. 10, 609. d. 611. d, e. [ii. pp. 299, 302], etc. 2. The *recollection* of what was beheld in a previous state of existence. Man, while on earth, could hardly attain to the apprehension of the True and Good, if it had not been imprinted on his soul long before his birth, in heaven, etc. All learning is only a recalling of what was known before, etc. Phaed. 56. a. [i. p. 75]. Men. 81. c. [iii. p. 20]. Cf. Cic. Tusc. 1, 24. 3. The thought of *independent* and *constant motion*. The soul must be immortal, because it may be proved to move constantly and of itself. Phaedr. 245. c. [i. p. 321]. Cf. Cic. Tusc. 1, 23. etc. On the *hope* of *reunion* after death. Cf. Phaed. 63. b. 68. a. [i. pp. 61, 66].

[135] Orig. c. Cels. 1. p. 30 (Ed. Delar.), Hier. adv. Jov. [iv. p. 186, ed. Par]. *Huet.* Dem. Ev. 9, 9, 4, etc.

though, apparently, these have a greater relationship to it than have the Hellenic legends of this kind.

It might, perhaps, have been considered more appropriate if we had made the remark before, when reflecting on the manner of clothing ideas in the Gospel and in Plato, that Plato makes use of the myths with a similar view and for a similar purpose, to those with which Christ uses the parables.[136] Christ wishes, by His parables, as well to conceal as to reveal His doctrines: He wishes, on the one hand, to render them plain to the senses and impressive; and, on the other, to soften their sharp spiritual definiteness, and allow one to fall back on their pleasing envelope. The myths in Plato were intended to have, and do have, the same significance. Does not Plato, *as an author*, in so far as he wishes to exhibit and magnify Socrates, appear to have a certain resemblance to the Evangelist John? It is well known, from the account in Eusebius, what was John's opinion with regard to the three first Gospels; and that his purpose, in his picture of our Lord's life, was to set forth clearly the higher and divine part of His nature. A like object probably lies at the base of the Platonic representation of Socrates. Plato, at least, has conceived and portrayed Socrates in an entirely different and far more noble and significant manner than Xenophon in his Memorabilia has done.

But a still closer parallel than the above may be drawn in reference to the intellectual warfare which was carried on by Plato, as by Christ, against a certain pernicious class of men. As Christ with the Pharisees, so Plato contends with the Sophists, and through his whole life with the same energy and with the same noble indignation. And Pharisaism and Sophistry are, in fact, very much alike, not merely in their unwholesome influence, but in their whole spirit and character. Obscurity and conceit are the basis of both; both are less

[136] Matt. xiii. 11, sq. Cf. Arist. Met. 1, 2.

concerned with *being* than with *seeming* and *pretence:* both impose on the undiscerning multitude, 'hold the truth in unrighteousness' (Rom. i. 18), and hinder it from what it should and would be and accomplish. In these parallels we should certainly observe those points also in which the *difference* between the Sophists and Pharisees is seen; and this is manifest chiefly in certain religious and moral principles of the Sophists, which we do not meet with in the teaching of the Pharisees. The distinction between *good* and *evil*, between *right* and *wrong*, did not, according to the Sophists, exist in and of itself, but is entirely a product of conventional life,[137] as also religion is only an invention of fear and a useful political instrument.

And who is not involuntarily reminded by the Platonic Republic of the Christian Kingdom of Heaven? Does not the former, like the latter, rest on a genuine religious and moral basis? Is not the former, like the latter, a representation of that dominion which belongs to the Divine in the life of man, and to which life owes its purest happiness and its highest dignity? Does not the former, like the latter, desire to awake and render effective the great thought of an inward brotherhood of the different ranks and individuals (at least among all the Hellenic races)?'[138] Plato certainly did not stand on that lofty eminence from which our Lord and Saviour took in view His holy aim, yet it must not be ignored or denied that a similar object stood obscurely before the enthusiastic soul of the pious heathen, when he created, *con amore*, that admirable picture of a State sanctified by piety and virtue.[139] Even the church fathers were not disinclined to place his Republic at least near to, and to compare it with, the Theo-

[137] Gorg. 483. a. sq. [i. p. 181]. Rep. 1, 338. c. sq. [ii. p. 15].

[138] Rep. 3, 415. a. 9, 590 d. [ii. pp. 98, 281].

[139] Assimilation not merely of the *individual*, but of the *species*, of humanity, to God—this is the great fundamental thought and aim of the Platonic Republic. Cf. the beautiful passage, Cic. de legg. 1, 7.

cracy of Moses.[140] Plato could hardly have wished his state to be considered an unattainable ideal.

Having now, in this manner, found in Plato's writings in no inconsiderable number of passages, doctrinal statements and views which accord more or less with the Bible and Christianity, we might suppose that in these passages we had obtained that which, in the accomplishment of our task, we were seeking. Of this opinion were most of the church fathers and theologians, when they praised the christianity of Plato. We should do wrong, however, if we rested content with the details which satisfied them; we should err if we thought that the asserted christianity of Plato is or can be proved by such passages. They really prove nothing but the highest probability that the Christian element in Plato's philosophy will actually be found on closer examination; they are not the fruits of the examination itself, but only a layer cropping out into the daylight, which incites us to scraping and digging, by giving reason to the supposition, that if we follow its lead, we shall meet with a rich bed of ore.

It is not difficult to understand why such collections of passages have no real scientific value, do not furnish a clear insight into themselves even, nor a proper basis for a safe judgment. The correct comprehension of each thought can proceed only from its organic connection with the others, which belong to it. By the dislocation of a sentence from its conditioned and conditioning passages its sense will be more or less shifted, and always so much the more, the more fresh and genial is the productiveness of the author from whom we take our single passages. In the case of those who glue together and mechanically compose their whole from single parts, this taking out of single parts may be done and may be instructive; but with those authors whose ideas and works grow up like trees, a correct apprehension of the individual part is scarcely

[140] Clem. Al. Strom. 1, 251. a. 4, 396. b. Euseb. Pr. Ev. 9, 6, etc.

possible without a living apprehension of the whole. Plato unquestionably belongs to the latter description of authors.

For these reasons, it may not be impossible that the passages adduced from Plato do not contain the Christian sense which they seem to do when taken by themselves and torn from their connection; as frequently the reverse is the case, when passages are brought forward to prove the unchristian and godless character of an author, which, taken in their true connection, would far rather have produced an entirely opposite impression.

In general, we cannot too strongly call attention to the error which we too readily fall into with regard to the maxims of the ancient Classics. The pleasure which our classically educated minds take in these maxims, rests not seldom on a misunderstanding of them. We do not take them in the sense of the ancients, but introduce, without seeking or knowing it, a modern sense into them, and then rejoice over the agreement we discover between our own young hearts and those venerable reliques of hoary antiquity. The frequency of such descriptions has been very justly remarked by Goethe.[141] Seneca affords a most fitting proof of the above. Jerome had no hesitation in calling him 'Our Seneca.'[142] Seneca certainly uses more than any other a Christian language, and yet his fundamental view of God and the world is utterly unchristian.[143]

But this fear of a misapprehension, to which a few passages taken out of their connection are so easily subject, is neither the only nor the principal reason which forbids us to suppose that we have already attained our object. The principal idea of the investigation itself still more necessitates its continuance. We wish to grasp the Christian element in Plato, this we have manifestly not done hitherto. The pas-

[141] Nachgelass. Werke. (Tüb. 1833), 9, p. 109.

[142] Hier. c. Jov. 1, 41. Cf. de vir. illust. 12.

[143] Seneca was a decided Pantheist. Ep. 92. 95. Cf. Nat. qu. 1, praef. (p. 155, ed. bip.).

sages and doctrines from Plato have as yet afforded us, not the Christian element itself, but what is related to, and resembles it. All such passages, taken together, even if they really have the Christian sense they seem to have, do not constitute the Christian element; nor is it contained in the doctrines, however closely they may follow the Christian, for the simple reason that that which is peculiarly the Christian element does not lie in the doctrines of Christianity, as will be shown more distinctly below.

However elevated and biblical therefore Plato's teachings concerning God and the world, virtue, life and immortality, may sound, we cannot call him Christian, because he had these doctrines, but we must be able to say the converse of this, because he is a Christian, he has these doctrines.

Wherein then properly consists the Christian element in Plato? In order to answer this question satisfactorily, we must now take quite a different course from our previous external empirical treatment.

II.

THE SUBJECT DEVELOPED GENETICALLY.

CHAPTER I.

REMOVAL OF FALSE VIEWS AND OPINIONS CONCERNING PLATO; RELATION OF PLATO TO THE NEW PLATONISTS AND TO ARISTOTLE.

'THE knowledge of the causal is the object of science; we say we know when we perceive the *cause* of that which exists.' In these words Proclus indicates the genetic mode of apprehension, and in this, and no other, must the course of the following examination be conducted, for it is at the same time the most instructive and the most interesting method.

An inward connection accordingly must unite all the points of our consideration which follow, or an intellectual necessity of leading over our consciousness from the one to the other; and the main conception of this examination must be manifest in the course of it, not as one formed and introduced by us, but rather as one which has been developed naturally from the subject-matter itself.

But if now the essential and Christian elements of the Platonic philosophy are to be unfolded, so to speak, organically, before our eyes, all that must necessarily first be removed which would operate destructively, or as a restriction, on this development. We must seek above all to obtain free space and a clear arena for this grand phenomenon, the consideration of which is to instruct and gratify us.

And, from the nature of the case, we must first attempt the removal of the prejudices and distorted views which are prevalent in cultivated circles and in the public opinion, concerning Plato. For we meet with these not so much in literature and in those philosophers who are authors, as in the conversation of the day, and in the thoughts of those, who have neither time nor ability for an independent investigation of classic antiquity.

The common opinions concerning Plato, which are in circulation among the educated public, could not be less favourable than they are, to him, or to the correct understanding of his peculiarities. This is the case not merely with the view of those who are accustomed to speak mockingly or depreciatingly of him and his philosophy, but also of the usual opinion of his admirers, who commend him enthusiastically. For, it is just this base and spurious enthusiasm which has most contributed to displace the true point of view for a considerate judgment of Plato, and to diffuse false conceptions of him and of the value of his philosophy. It is often the fate of great men, that their friends injure them far more than their enemies.

That which has earned favour for Plato with a large part of the public, is of very doubtful value, and would be adapted to lessen our esteem for him, or to draw just blame on him, rather than to enhance his reputation, if it really existed in such a manner and to so great an extent, as is frequently represented.

The representation, as if a certain sentimental, fanciful, idealistic tendency were the characteristic mark of Plato, was long ago so much brought into vogue, that we usually think first of this tendency, whenever the name of Plato is mentioned. But this representation is wrong throughout, and by no means reaches what is essential in Plato.

That part of it may be most easily refuted which has reference to sentimentality or extravagance of feeling. How could it have existed in Plato, when it is most generally acknowledged that it was foreign to the whole of classic antiquity! The predominant character of antique life and of antique art and literature,

is the plastic; everywhere sensuously beautiful form and power, clear understanding and certain harmony; but—to our modern feeling—for the most part also a marble coldness and want of geniality. The tearful tenderness or sorrowful blessedness which is so especially peculiar to our sentimentality, is sought in vain among the ancients, not excluding Plato.[1] How could such a sickly fever-glow be produced from his strong and thoroughly sound mind?

We do not wish absolutely to condemn sentimentality, but we wish to distinguish a pure, tender, inward, and elevated form of feeling from that moon-struck affectation and disguised appetite for dainties, which has been mainly excited and nourished among us by a certain kind of romances. The necessity and value of the former for our modern life, can scarcely be denied; but just as little can it be mistaken by what beams this flower, in the history of human development, has been called forth and unfolded; by no other than those which created and glorified the pictures of the virgin mother of God, and yearningly extended upwards the round temple arches. Noble sentimentality is a product of Christianity in its union with Germanic life; but the whining and base is a product of that flaccidity and weakness of nerves, which *would* indeed, but *cannot*. That neither kind could exist at all in Plato, lies in the nature of the case, and is evident enough in his teaching and works. One may convince himself of this in a moment, by taking into consideration Plato's views of the nature and worth of the feelings. He seeks for the origin and seat of the feelings in the mortal and unreasoning part of the soul;[2] feelings are, accordingly, things which are without measure or degree; for we cannot suppose any degree, above which they cannot rise, or below which they cannot sink.[3] The

[1] The single passage in Plato which has an *almost* sentimental appearance is Phaedr. 229. a. 230. b. [i. pp. 303–4]. But the sentimentality is far more apparent than real; the thoroughly poetic, youthful character of the dialogue gives it this appearance.

[2] Tim. 69. d. [ii. p. 380]. [3] Phil. 27. e. sq. [iv. p. 37].

state of the feelings is not *being* but *becoming;* they are in an everlasting wavering and fluctuation.[4] Hence also their worthlessness in respect of science and morality. For since both of these have to avail themselves only of being, they ought not to meddle much with the becoming and ever changeable, and should in every way guard against its injurious influence. Especially do the feelings injure, to an important extent, the moral life, by either bribing it with their charms or subduing it by their violence;[5] yea, so soon as they have taken root as desires and passions, they render the attainment of true virtue almost impossible.[6]

Plato does not indeed throw all the feelings into one class; he expressly distinguishes from one another the higher and the lower, the noble and the base emotions, and allows a certain value to the former;[7] but still always a subordinate and conditional value; and the exercise of the feelings is never reckoned by him a part of the proper life of the spirit, but only of its life in the phenomenal world and in the mortal body.[8]

Considering these opinions of Plato, which do not set a high value on the emotions generally, it is certainly not to be wondered at if he propounds principles and approves of regulations which are, to our minds, thoroughly hurtful and even revolting. It has been long since remarked and shown how closely the spirit of his Ethics is related to the spirit of Stoicism; the Platonic doctrine of morals is distinguished mainly from that of the Stoics, in that the former allows the senses to afford a contribution to

[4] Phil. 53. c. sq. [iv. p. 83]. Tim. 52. d, e [ii. p. 359].

[5] Phaed. 66, c. cf. 83, e. [i. pp. 65, 87]. Rep. 7, 519. b. [ii. p. 207]. Cf. on the corrupting effect of that which flatters the senses, Gorg. 464. e. sq. [i. p. 157].

[6] Rep. 8, 559. b. [ii. p. 248].

[7] Phil. 12. d. [iv. p. 6]. The feeling of the beautiful more noble than the common pleasurable feelings, 51, b. sq. [iv. p. 79]. The truest and highest joys are those which are connected with virtue and follow in its train, 63. e. [iv. p. 103].

[8] Cf. Phaed. 79. c. [i. p. 82].

the happy life of the wise man,[9] while the latter stedfastly asserts the exclusive and complete adequacy of the reason to happiness, but in its moral requirements the Academy appears throughout with the same hardness and severity as the Stoa,[10] the former forbade as strictly as the latter grief and complaining at the death of beloved relatives,[11] and had no hesitation in approving, on political grounds, the exposure of weakly children.[12]

Who would consider such an one sentimental, who propounds such a doctrine of the affections, and makes such requisitions?

The assumption of a certain extravagance of feeling in Plato, is indeed so closely connected with an expression which, though resting on a mistake, is universally used, that the assumption must fall if the incorrectness of the expression is proved. We hear much and often of *Platonic Love*, which, in fact, according to the idea usually connected with the word, is of a truly sentimental character. Now, not a few who use this expression, imagine that this is the kind of love which Plato either himself possessed, or particularly well described, and hence its name. But Plato is perfectly innocent of having had this love baptized under his name. He knows nothing of the kind of love named after him, and it is a pure mistake that tenderest lovers have made him their patron saint. The Banquet of Plato has given the chief occasion to this mistake. In this dialogue occurs the well-known poetical account of the two halves, which, under a powerful mutual attraction are continually seeking each other.[13] The appearance of sentimentality which this expres-

[9] Plato says expressly that happiness is a good compounded of wisdom and pure pleasure. Phil. 21. e. sq. [iv. p. 25]. So also Arist. Eth. Nic. 1, 15. Cic. Fin. 4, 25 sq. 5, 26. sq.

[10] Rep. 10, 605. d, e. [ii. p. 295].

[11] Rep. 3, 387. e. [ii. p. 67]. The in part unnatural disowning of such feelings was generally in high regard among the Greeks. Cf. Plutarch, Pericles, c. 36.

[12] Rep. 5, 459. d. [ii. p. 143].

[13] Conv. 192. b. sq. Dante and Petrarch were the principal agents in

sion of the two halves, has, at first view, disappears entirely on a closer consideration of the account. It is the comedian Aristophanes in whose mouth the story is put; and the comical, ironical, and even caricaturist character of this fable is throughout sufficiently evident. Even the beginning of it, drawn after the manner of Hogarth or the Flemish painters, which I cannot transfer hither from the danger of offending delicate senses, is sufficiently adapted to allay, most completely, every sentimental paroxysm in which, perhaps, a genial reader may have approached it.

The idea of Platonic love might be referred much more correctly to the remainder of the dialogue than to this delectable story of the two halves. For the main subject of this dialogue is certainly Love, and the more noble in contradistinction to basely sensual and impure love. But if noble love is here treated of, it is neither the love of sentiment nor even that of sex, which is meant, while it is this exactly in which the nature of the so-called Platonic love consists and is manifested. The love which Plato commends in the Banquet as the chief requisite of a true philosopher, is nothing but a reverence, grounded in the rational spirit, for the truly good and beautiful, and proceeding from it an incessant but dispassionate striving thereafter. Not the slightest traces of the extravagant sweetness which dwells in Platonic love is seen in this thoroughly philosophical love; in the former, the feelings play the principal part; in the latter, they do not come on the stage at all, the morally thinking spirit being both their author and subject.[14]

With what complete absence of sentimentality Plato regarded and treated of sexual and sentimental love, is sufficiently evident from the Republic. He here not only proposes, with all

bringing the so-called Platonic love into honour and regard. Conv. 185 c, d. [iii. p. 500].

[14] In this sense Socrates calls himself a votary of Love, and says, that love is his only science and art. Phaedr. 227. c. 257. a. 248. d. [i. pp. 301, 333, 324]. Conv. 177. d. [iii. p. 485].

seriousness a full community of wives,[15] at least in the warrior-caste, but seems generally to be acquainted with no other point of view or object of the relation between the male and female sexes, than the physical and political. That which he has most at heart in this relation, is the production of children in every respect proper for the State, and he does not, for this reason, in the least regard, not even in so far as the State requires them, the bonds of affection between parents and children.[16]

However, falsely then, this representation of a certain extravagance of feeling is connected with Plato's name, it would be equally unjust, if, having learnt that the contrary is much more the case with him, we should therefore condemn him or allow him to be lowered in our esteem. This we have no right to do until we have proved the *absolute* excellence of *our* sentimentality, and shown that the want of it is to be charged to his deliberate and intentional hardness of heart. And either of these results it would be difficult to accomplish.

But it is easier to prevent his being credited with sentimentality than to free him from the pretended highly honourable designation of an *Idealist*. For this designation originates, as it seems, not so much in the obscure conceptions of ordinary thinking, but rather in the clear conceptions of science and philosophy itself. It is an usual, and generally known scientific classification, in accordance with which all philosophical tendencies and systems are brought into two grand divisions, viz., of Realism and Idealism; and since, for many years, in all treatises and manuals of philosophy and its history, Plato has been placed in the class of Idealists, it is naturally supposed, outside the schools in common life, that there is sufficient reason for calling him an Idealist.

We shall leave undiscussed for the present the correctness of

[15] Rep. 5, 457. c. sq. Tim. 18. c. [ii. pp. 141, 320]. An account of a similar community of wives and property among the Atlantides is given in a fragment of a history of Lybia, by Eumolus, found in Crete, in 1821.

[16] Rep. 5, 460. b. sq. [ii. p. 144].

this classification and title, for we have not to inquire first into the scientific conception of Idealism, but into the representations with which the expression is connected in common life. It is quite possible that science is perfectly correct in designating a certain intellectual striving by the name of Idealism, and yet, that it would be quite wrong to repeat this word and entitle this striving Idealism in common life. For scientific and ordinary thinking are, in general, essentially different both in form and intrinsic value; and an idealist, in a history of philosophy, is, doubtless, quite a different thing from an idealist who is commended in the conversation of the day.

Let then Plato be represented as an idealist in the language of the cathedra and the compendium,—we will concede, at starting, the assumption, that there is a rational and tenable idea connected with the word; but against the general and favourite application of this name to Plato in common life, we must claim most decidedly, that Plato is *not at all* what is usually understood by an idealist.

How then is the idealist usually thought of? An enthusiastic man who loves and makes *ideals*, *i.e.*, sublime intellectual originals and types, and prefers these unconditionally to the common reality. The conceptions of idea, ideal and idealistic, ideality and idealism are, for the most part, so mingled together in the popular mode of representation, that it is difficult to effect a sharp distinction between them in ordinary thinking.

But what renders it especially difficult to oppose or correct the traditional view of Plato's idealism, is the pretty general and passionate admiration of the so-called ideals. Ideals are among us, like the crown-diamonds, of the highest value. It is thought almost everywhere in all seriousness, that men cannot do better than manufacture ideals, and strive after their attainment with all their powers: life would lose all its beauty and nobility if it ceased to look up to the heights where hover its bright ideals; but, on the other hand, every one who contributes to awaken and diffuse enthusiasm for ideals, deserves well of the world and

mankind. And it is said to be just this which we are to regard especially as the beautiful and admirable in the Platonic philosophy, that it is itself penetrated with this enthusiasm for ideals, and is also able to kindle it in all susceptible natures.

He who would meddle with ideals, doubting somewhat their highest value, strikes at the heart of the ideal-loving public, and need not count on acquiescence in his discussions, nay, not even on being calmly heard. But we need not now enter into the controversy proper concerning the nature and value of ideals, we need merely to institute as close a comparison as possible between the thinking and acting of an ordinary idealist and those of Plato, and to judge from this, whether Plato is to be called an idealist or not.

The first thing we perceive in ordinary idealists is *ill-humour* and *discontent*. They do not turn a friendly countenance on the world, but look down on common life with the expression of pride or contempt.

This appears to be the case also with Plato. His contemporaries reproached him with his ill-humour, his air of superiority, and his knitted brows.

With what are the idealists discontented? This they declare with sufficient plainness. It is with that which is and happens in every-day reality. It is not beautiful or good enough for them.

Does not our Plato openly say the same? Does he not complain often, and sharply and bitterly enough of the common course of things, the ordinary doings and practices of men?[17]

With this discontent, is most intimately connected among the idealists, the desire and striving after a better state of things.

This is also sufficiently manifest in Plato.[18]

Now, how do the idealists act, in order, according to their abilities, to realize this desire, and to give a better form to the common reality? They raise themselves in thought from the *lower* to the *higher*, from that which *is*, to that which, according

[17] Rep. 6, 496. b. Cf. 500. b. [ii. pp. 183, 188].

[18] Phil. 20. d. [iv. p. 23]. Cf. Gorg. 526. e. [i. p. 231], etc.

to their ideas, *ought to be*, they project in their minds pure and excellent originals and copies for all the conditions and relations of life, and furnish the same with all conceivable perfections. These ideals they present continually before the world; they require the world to reflect upon them incessantly, and to copy them as far as possible.

Does not Plato do the same? There is in him, unmistakeably, the ascending direction of thought; he indubitably raises himself high above all the low and base things of earth, to the contemplation of the eternally beautiful and good in heaven,[19] and not only guides up thither the looks of all his followers, but enjoins it upon them, as a sacred duty, to order all their life and actions in accordance with their perceptions of the most beautiful and most perfect.[20]

Accordingly, Plato's opinions and procedure agree in all essential particulars with those of the idealists, and, consequently, he is with perfect justice denominated an idealist! What shall we say to this result? That Plato's intellectual tendency and that of the idealists *appear* to be parallel to each other, without, however, being like each other in their inward essence.

Even the discontent of Plato with the actual world, is essentially different from that of the self-sufficient idealists.

To be discontented with the existing and actual, is in the power of every one! But the chief point is, has every one a right so to be? This the ordinary idealists presuppose without further consideration; but the presupposition is grounded usually in nothing else than vanity and obscurity; Plato, on the other hand, may be justified in the most decided manner for his dissatisfaction with his own times.

Should the concern which the actual state of things causes to this or that person, in itself give him the right to set up his

[19] See the principal passages on the ideal world, which is also called *heaven* or the *kingdom of truth*. Rep. 7, 517. b. 516. b.; 6, 509. d. [ii. pp. 205, 204]. Phaedr. 248. b. [i. p. 324].

[20] Rep. 6, 500. c. sq. Tim. 90. d. [ii. pp. 188, 407].

ideals in the place of the things which displease them, then should we look with suspicion on the beauty of the world and the free spirit of life. Then it would be difficult to draw the boundary line between idealists and fools. For how many so-called ideals spring from shallow discontent and perverseness! Much appears to the ignorant, bad and exceptionable, which, on a more profound investigation, is recognized as good and beneficial. That sleeper under the oak tree, who, if he had had the arrangement of the world, would have made pumpkins grow on the oak, has still everywhere his parallels, as, *e.g.*, is sufficiently evident in the political ideals and plans of reform of the daily journals. From the Girondist to St Simon and Fourier, what a gallery of ideals from such sources!

Not less numerous is that species of ideals, the formation of which is induced by disordered nerves or in perverseness of heart. Did not even the clear-headed Lessing think, in an irritated mood, that the trees should appear *red* instead of green, if a landscape is to be ideally beautiful?

To those who, for reasons of this kind form ideals, Plato truly did not belong. His variance with his times was historically, no less than philosophically, well-founded. He who censures his own times, and is desirous of improving them, must first himself be truly better than they; only he who possesses a larger amount of wisdom, virtue and piety than is to be found in real life, may presume to operate on life in arranging and transforming it.

But, on the one hand, history shows us the gross corruption and inward rottenness of Athenian life in Plato's times, and the moral spotlessness, freshness, and strictness of his character; and, on the other hand, the study of his philosophy and philosophy in general, enables us to perceive in him a greatness and clearness of mind, a fulness and depth of knowledge and insight, which we shall not find so united in any one of his contemporaries, and scarcely in any other sage of the ancient or modern world. If we add to this his earnest piety, which preserved him

from the impious improvisation of idealistic attempts at reform, we cannot well doubt that from his nobility of mind and soul he had power to fight with the sword of the spirit against the evil and perishable for the true and eternal.

The case is quite otherwise in an intellectual and moral point of view, with our ordinary idealists. They *think* the good, but they *have* and *do* it not. Their thought stands in a melancholy disproportion to their being and will; it stretches up heavenwards, it hovers around above the stars, while the rest of the man lies stunted on the earth, and, from its incompleteness and weakness is unable to accomplish its purpose. Hence also their ideals have not the pith and substance, which only a heart divinely animated, and moral integrity, such as Plato had, could give them; and the reality, however bad and worthless it may appear to such persons, is, in general, much better and more rational than their one-sided and consumptive excogitations.[21]

But in still another point is Plato diametrically opposed to our ordinary idealizers; *viz.*, in his procedure in the formation of ideals. Among the idealists the mode of proceeding is, for the most part, arbitrary and subjective, while in Plato it is objective and necessary. The ordinary idealist imagines all sorts of ideals, such as he desires; Plato presents none but such ideas as present themselves persistently in his closest course of thinking as the most correct. However high the idealist may raise himself—his ideals are still to be found only within his subjectivity and the images appertaining to it; they are creatures of his subjective thinking, which do not exist in reality. But Plato's highest endeavour is directed to the knowledge of that, not which he *thinks to be*, but which *is really*, true and good;[22] he is clearly conscious that he has not invented his ideas within his subjectivity, but has perceived them beyond this, in their objective and real existence. Plato is consequently not so much a *maker*[23]

[21] Rep. 5. 458. a, b. Cf. Rep. 7, 529. a, b. [ii. pp. 142, 218 sq.], where 'those who gape upwards' are ridiculed.

[22] Conv. 211. a. [iii. p. 551]. [23] Rep. 10, 596. b. [ii. p. 285].

as a *seer*[24] of ideals; and hence, while the characteristic mark of our ordinary ideals is their non-existence in reality, so the characteristic mark of his consists in just the reverse, their existence and real entity. The probable objection, that it has not been granted to any philosopher to attain to the intuition of the objectively true, does not lessen or alter the above stated difference. However the case may be with the objectivity of knowledge—this remains beyond dispute, that the ordinary idealists not only themselves confess the unreality of their ideals, but are even accustomed to commend loudly this non-existence as the best proof of the supernatural splendour of their ideals; while Plato ever labours, with all the powers of his mind, to prove the existence of his originals and their possible realization in real life. It is therefore certain that if Plato is to be called an idealist, it must be in a sense quite different to that usually connected with the word; and that the view still cherished by many is utterly false, according to which this earnest and careful inquirer is considered an over-heated enthusiast and dreamer.[25]

Those who have most frequently called Plato an idealist, have not for the most part desired thereby to disparage, so much as to honour, him. We have deemed it necessary to protest against this kind of honorary recognition, or at least, to allow it to pass only conditionally. But it is not less necessary to turn now also to those who have really misconstrued and disparaged Plato, and to show how unfounded are the representations by which they have injured him in the public opinion.

There has proceeded namely, from the declared opposers of Plato, a depreciative judgment concerning the scientific value of his philosophy, which is now pretty firmly established among a large part of the public. A double reproach has been chiefly brought upon it, that it is too syncretic, and that it is too imaginative.

[24] Phaedr. 247. e. [i. p. 324].

[25] See especially Rep. 7, 540. a. sq. [ii. p. 230], on the period necessary to the attainment of the highest ideals.

Even in antiquity, some malevolent persons were so bold as to charge Plato with syncretism and plagiarism. Accordingly, he is said at one time to have brought his wisdom from Egypt and the Egyptian priests; at another time, they make him out to be a disciple who plundered his master, Pythagoras,[26] or Heraclitus, or Protagoras,[27] at another, they adduce even Epicharmus,[28] or some other predecessor, as the source from which he drew, without naming it; and far from duly recognizing the organic connection throughout the rise and completion of his philosophy, they are indeed so bold as to attribute to it a mixed character, and to regard it as a motley juxtaposition of various elements and parts of systems.

Yet, in the history of philosophy and literature, a special attention or categorical refutation has never been vouchsafed to such charges. And rightly! For they bear their intrinsic emptiness too plainly on their front, to render such a refutation necessary. They have, in fact, long since collapsed; and at the present day, no one any longer seriously believes that Plato deceived the world with the splendour of a great light, which he did not himself possess, but purloined from another.

The correct view of the matter may be this, that it would be as false to deny to the Platonic philosophy an accession of materials for ideas from without, as it would be unreasonable to depreciate the intellectual greatness of Plato on account of his reception of these materials. That is perfectly correct, and beyond all doubt, which Ritter has especially placed in a proper light, that Plato not only possessed and displayed more originality of mind than any other, but that his philosophy is also a genuine

[26] Diog. La. 8, 15. Especially is he said to have plundered the dearly bought writings of Philolaus. Cf. Gell. Noct. Att. 3, 17. That Plato's philosophy is rooted in part in Pythagorean and Heraclitic philosophemes, as also Aristotle (Met. 1, 6) says, cannot be denied, but is not prejudicial to his reputation for originality.

[27] Euseb. Praep. Ev. 10, 3.

[28] Diog. La. vit. Plat. The passages which he quotes from Epicharmus, certainly do express quite Platonic thoughts.

product of Hellenism, and presents most distinctly the character of Hellenism. But we must not consider this originality and Hellenism as absolute limits which separate and exclude all else. The powerful originality of the Platonic mind is rather so to be conceived of, as that Plato, although taking up and working into himself the whole mass of philosophical knowledge and inquiry which preceded him, was by no means a mere follower of his predecessors, but as an independent thinker, uniting these elements with his own ideas in an organic method, created and fashioned a new and peculiar philosophy. And though the Hellenic feeling and spirit may be by far the most predominant in his philosophy, yet the gentle breathing also of another spirit in it cannot be disputed, whose origin was undeniably in the East. Who then would explain so mechanically the occurrence of the religious philosopheme of the Orient in Plato's works, as though Plato, like a modern scholar, had studied and excerpted all sorts of exotic books? The Oriental influences on his mind are, on the contrary, to be derived first and chiefly from the intellectual atmosphere of Hellenic life; for this atmosphere, since the times of Orpheus and Pythagoras, had been penetrated and fertilized by ideas from the East.

Of greater consequence than that old, empty charge, that Plato was a syncretist, is the reproach that he is a phantast. For the former may be considered as almost unknown, but the latter is still loudly expressed and extensively credited. As a legend propagates itself by tradition among a large part of the public, so Plato's reputation is founded not so much on the scientific value and bearing of his philosophy — for, in a scientific regard, it shows many weaknesses and crudities, — but rather on some brilliant peculiarities of his mind and style. Plato is more of a poet than a thinker,[29] more of a genial than a philosophical mind. A severe scientific investigation, a constant, systematic

[29] That Plato occupied himself much with poetry in his youth, and attempted all kinds of poetic composition is of course set forth in support of this view. Diog. La. v., etc. Ael. Var. hist. 2, 30.

progress in the course of thought, is not his affair. He resigns himself rather to the bold flight of his fiery fancy, which is the most prevailing and most distinguished faculty of his mind. To this faculty he is principally indebted for his richness in ideas, views, ingenious thoughts and images,—the abundance of which is manifest in his works; and these, in fact, often sublime thoughts and new and surprising flashes of intellect must be considered the chief profit to be drawn from the study of his works; and that which lends to his writings their special charm, is the brilliant eloquence and classic refinement with which the thoughts are presented.

How often do we hear this view expressed as doubtless the most correct by those who know no more of Plato's writings than their titles! How many of those who are somewhat more intimately acquainted with his works, who always regard him and his philosophy only through these spectacles, and then fearlessly and confidently maintain: 'Yes, this in fact is the case with Plato and his philosophy!'

But the case is in fact a little different from this. That Plato possesses a rich and lively fancy is certainly not a subject of doubt. But that this renders him more fit for a poet than a philosopher is an error. Of itself, fancy hinders no man in a clear perception of the truth, but only when there is no true equipoise between it and the other powers of the mind, and when the consciousness is unable to maintain its calm circumspection in the midst of the other mental activities, and its secure dominion over them. There are, of course, feeble minds enough, in which the centre is only too easily overpowered by the excitements and agitations of the periphery, and whose kernel of consciousness does not remain clear and firm under the influence of in-coming thoughts, but is coloured and affected, and even entirely carried away. By such fanciful persons, whose whole thought and action are governed by their excessive power of imagination, fancy has come into bad repute, as piety by hypocrites. Such minds are naturally incapable of

true philosophical inquiry, although, in such exalted mental conditions they not infrequently strike on thoughts as new as they are correct and suggestive. But what they gain and bestow in this manner is not so much logical perceptions and judgments as happy thoughts and combinations.

But the Platonic philosophy is certainly not woven of such materials. He must be a bungler in the art of philosophical weaving, who, studying earnestly Plato's philosophy, does not very soon become aware of the exact contrary of this, and who does not with deep reverence recognize the severe strength of his philosophical mind and his dialectic method. In truth, if any one can lay claim to sharp, logical, severely close thinking, it is Plato, as will be clearly evinced in the following chapter. But because Plato, so soon as he has completed his inward intellectual labour, and has fully developed the idea of the subject which he wishes to present, and closely grasped it in all its points, does not allow the severity of abstract thinking to govern his presentation, but rather allows that which he has philosophically elaborated, to appear in the poetic form of dialogue, as a light and free play of the thoughts, this mainly has induced not a few to create the suspicion, whether Plato possessed a properly philosophical faculty. Now, in fact, we might thus, in the end, bring into doubt the anatomical skill of the Creator, because, in the most beautiful images of His hand we do not generally discern the skeleton and plan which they have within them and according to which they were formed.

Plato a phantast!—he, who not only thoroughly studied the mathematics, but always manifested an unusual strength in mathematical discipline, and urged its cultivation everywhere with the greatest zeal![30]

The groundlessness of the widely extended prejudice against Plato's imaginative character has really been already frequently proved by careful inquirers; and not a few passages might be

[30] Rep. 7, 527. b, c. [ii. p. 216]. Hence also the much discussed inscription on his school. Cf. Phil. 66. a. [iv. p. 107].

quoted from his works which have attacked and combated this prejudice with sharper weapons than are mine. Yet, perhaps, our opponents would confess no convincing power to such testimonies and refutations, however they might be accumulated, because, as they would say, they have proceeded, for the most part, from such admirers and friends of Plato as are themselves abundantly gifted with a lively imagination.

And so here only a single competent combatting of this view may be introduced, instead of all others, which proceeds from an inquirer whom no one would think of charging with being gifted with a fiery imagination or predilection for the fanciful, I mean the diligent, honestly dry, and thorough Tennemann, who thus expresses himself concerning Plato and the assorted prevalence of fancy in him:—'If we regard the talents of Plato . . . he is a single phenomenon of his kind in antiquity, and we shall scarcely find, in modern times, a man who could be placed beside him in his entire individuality. He united in himself peculiarities of mind, which, taken singly, occur here and there in a higher degree, but have never been excelled in their union and beautiful harmony. The first talent, which manifested itself earliest in him, is the power of imagination, distinguished on the side of compass, vivacity, and strength. . . . But he had yet another talent, which was no whit behind the first in pre-eminence, viz., the gift of independent thought, an ever active spirit of inquiry, acuteness, and profoundness of mind in a high degree. With all his strength of imagination, his power of thought was still superior. The latter rules the former, prescribes the limits, the objects, and the manner, for and in which it is to manifest itself. . . . That Plato was no enthusiast, his interest in mathematical science alone proves.' It would be far easier to bring about an understanding concerning the asserted bad influence of Plato's fancy on his philosophical judgment, if strange and distorted conceptions of the value and significance of fancy generally had not insinuated themselves among us. We not only very

frequently exchange fancy, presentative power and imagination with each other, but we are also accustomed, by wise education from youth up, to give fancy credit for little that is good, and to consider it as a dangerous juggler, who deprives honest people of their little judgment before they are aware. With the word fancy, we connect involuntarily the ideas of falsehood and deceit. We are afterwards confirmed in these sensible thoughts when we hear a lecture on psychology, and learn to distribute the different faculties in elegant order into their respective fobs. And, so the longer we live, the more is this idea fixed in us, and we are even more terrified by the words, 'the fancy is loose,' than when we are told, 'the devil is loose.'

The superabundance of fancy, in some persons, can no more tend to the injury of this mental faculty itself, or lessen its value, than fire loses its value, because children and fools so easily get burnt by it. If we have cause to disapprove of the fancy in this or that individual, we must be cautious of breaking our rod over fancy in general. We must not imagine that the different faculties of the mind, in different individuals, are all cut out by an uniform pattern, and that hence we may know what the judgment and fancy are in this or that individual, so soon as we have obtained a general idea of what are usually called judgment and fancy. We must never forget that every intellectual power, in every intellectual life, is at the same time conditioning and conditioned, and that hence the possession of fancy by one is and signifies something quite different from its possession by another. We must come to the rational insight, that among all the mental faculties, when the other favourable conditions are secured, none reaches further, or operates more significantly, than fancy, and that the so-called reason raises itself to true rationality and mental clearness only to the degree that it is capable of becoming fancy.

All those poor wretches, who live in their blind alleys, from which frequently they do not emerge their whole life long, and make boots and shoes for daily supply and trade, live on and

work on that which those have apprehended and laboriously gained, whose fancy they bravely abuse. For the great, solid, substantial and objective, is apprehended and known in no other way than by the lively elevation of fancy in a clear and thoughtful mind. Now, since by this it has come into history, and has been borne by its stream through all sorts of channels of culture, even into the blind alleys, those narrow-minded persons boastingly say, that they have searched it out and discovered it by their sound common sense!

We found ourselves compelled, in order to render possible a fair and impartial consideration of Plato and his philosophy, to secure him as well from his friends as from his enemies, and to deliver him from the praise of the false enthusiasm of the former and the one-sided and prejudiced criticism of the latter. If we trace that enthusiasm and this criticism to the first and oldest sources from which they have proceeded, we meet with the former in the New Platonists, and with the latter in Aristotle. Both, though from opposite sides, have much injured the Platonic philosophy and the judgment concerning it; the former, by setting too high a value on it and corrupting it; the latter, by misconstruing and decrying it. We must, therefore, seek to render the relation of both to it as clear as possible.

New Platonism has been often supposed to be in the closest connection with the philosophy of Plato, as if both were, so to speak, in one continuous line, without perceptible interruption. The former was regarded as a second, more extended and enlarged edition of the latter; for this view of the relation of the New Platonists to the head and master of their school, appeared to have proceeded from the history of philosophy itself. The observation, namely, obtruded itself, that, especially in the middle ages, all the minds who attached themselves to Plato had been gained for him through New Platonism. Since, therefore, in Plato's disciples, both systems, the Platonic and the New Platonic, existed almost indifferently with and in each other, it was natural that others, who had less interest in

obtaining an exact knowledge of pure Platonism, were accustomed to regard it as something not essentially different from New Platonism. Whence much censure, on their part, has been directed against Plato, which ought to have been directed against the New Platonists.

More modern inquiries have fully proved the essential difference between them; and so, then, the strict requisition must be laid on every one who would come to, or pronounce a decision concerning Plato, that he do not again mingle things which have been shown not to belong to each other. It is enough for our purpose to indicate a few points from which this difference may be plainly recognized.

New Platonism arose, as is well known, in Alexandria, at the end of the second century after Christ. The place and the time of its origin and the polemic tendency which it very soon assumed, are sufficient to lead to the presumption that it must not be considered a reproduction or continued development of the Platonic philosophy. In Alexandria were mingled not only nations, but opinions. Oriental, Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Egyptian elements flowed in and through the mental culture of Alexandria. This was a time of universal fermentation and dissolution; a time, when the old individualities of the then world-historic nations were almost wholly extinct, when the adoption of foreign ideas and elements no longer took place in the organic method, by assimilation, but wholly in the chemical way, by amalgamation. This was eminently the case in Egypt, in general, and in Alexandria, in particular. What else could succeed, in such circumstances, but a forcible combination into one whole of opposing fragments?

New Platonism is a combination of this kind. The New Platonists have been denominated, after the example of the church fathers, Eclectics. This denomination, however, is not quite appropriate. For, with the idea of Eclecticism is always connected the conception of a certain calm, dispassionate taste,

which selects from different views, placed side by side, those most agreeable to it. But the New Platonists did not form their systems thus. They did not arise in a dry, but a fiery manner. An impassioned fire formed them from the chaotic condition of the then philosophy. The glow of enthusiasm is not only not to be denied to New Platonism, but it was unquestionably its plastic principle.

The glowing enthusiasm of the New Platonists was greatly heightened by their contest with Christianity. It must be remembered that New Platonism strove after nothing less than the dominion of the world; and for this it contended with Christianity. It depended not merely on scientific and philosophical importance, but eminently also on religious value and efficiency. It sought, by purifying and renovating heathenism, to procure it the victory over the (to the Hellenes) scandalous religion of a Crucified One. It is well known how the Emperor Julian endeavoured to terminate the struggle in favour of New Platonism. The character and culture of this man indicate, besides, that so slight an intellectual value is not to be attributed to New Platonism as is frequently done, by inconsiderately despatching it with a few distinguished phrases, as, 'productions of heated and over-strained minds,' and others of the same sort.

With all its monstrous and fanciful excrescences, there cannot be refused to New Platonism a profound and rich spirituality; and if we compare the Theologumena of the New Platonists with those of the Christians of that time, it is soon perceived that as much effort and self-command is required to comprehend and believingly adopt many of the former as some of the latter, and that the Platonic Theology, as a whole, has a certain intellectual distinction and deportment, a noble strain and tone in advance of the Christian dogmatics of those times, which, under awkward hands, turned out somewhat massive and clumsy. The Enneads of Plotinus, the most important of all the New Platonists, take a very honourable place in the

history of the human mind, and give highly original flashes of light as well on divine things as on human endeavours.

That which characterizes New Platonism chiefly on the side of religion, which is the most important for us, is its Theosophy[31] and Theurgy.[32] Both of these apparently had their origin in the East.[33] Every one who is only moderately acquainted with these things knows that this effeminate and voluptuous kind of divine illumination and piety is especially at home in India, and that the formulas of conjuration, by which it is pretended that the divine powers can be made subservient to the human will, form a principal constituent of the Asiatic religions. With the Theosophy are connected the Pantheistic and emanational ideas of New Platonism, and the necessary consequence of the Theurgy is an extraordinary cultivation of the doctrine of Dæmons.

These few indications are sufficient to place us in a condition to recognize and designate the essential difference between Plato and the New Platonist. In Plato there is not the slightest trace of Theurgy and Theosophy, which are most prominent in New Platonism. Plato declaims, in the strongest manner, as we have seen, against the illusion of men, that by various arts they can bring the gods under their will; representing this delusion, that the gods are to be reached like men, by bribing their passions, as the fruitful source of all irreligion and wickedness.[34] His theology is as free from all dainties

[31] *Porphyrius* relates that *Plotinus* was, during his life, *four times* in glorified union with God. Porph. vit. Plot. c. 14. 18.

[32] For the *Theurgio* writings of Porph., see in Suidas. s. v. Cf. Aug. C. Dei. 10, 9. 10. Jamblichus' work de Myst. Æg. is, in truth, nothing but a compendium of Theurgy. *Marinus* commended Proclus for his Theurgy. Remarkable example of an inquisition, in this respect, in Amm. Marc. 29, 1.

[33] For this reason also Plotinus went with Gordian to Persia, in order to draw directly from the fountain-head. A hint of the Oriental sources of Jambl. de Myst. 1, 2.

[34] Rep. 2, 364. c. 3, 390. d. [ii. pp. 43, 70]. Legg. 10. 905. d. [v. p. 444].

and exstasies as the pure beam of light is from the varying and glowing play of colours. He certainly agrees with the New Platonists in declaring the intuition and apprehension of the divine to be the highest aim of philosophical life; but he diverges from them significantly, by assuming the possibility of this immediate intuition only after death;[35] while the New Platonists constructed a formal theory of the manner in which a man, while still on earth, may enter by the spirit into heaven and into immediate communion with God—exstasies and trances form the chief constituent of their religious life. The whole theory of emanations was entirely foreign to Plato; and, although Pantheism has been discovered, in his view of the universe, yet in him it is neither expressed so clearly and decidedly, nor so fully carried out and brought to bear, as in the New Platonists. The Platonic demonology has certainly much in common with the New Platonic; but, in their meaning as a whole, and their main tendency, they are essentially different from each other: for, while with the New Platonists the meaning is really *cosmological* and *theological*, in Plato the demons have rather a *logical* and ethical significance. In the former, it is properly the demoniac nature which the demons manifest and in which they appear; in the latter, however, under the name of demon, lies rather a philosophical idea, viz., as we have seen, the idea indispensable to Plato, of an intermediate being.[36] Plato made room for demons in his philosophy, less for their own sake than for the sake of this idea; the demoniac nature, as such, the physical and metaphysical, inward and outward relations of demons, are, for him, of too little importance for him to concern himself further with them.

The time and kind of origin, moreover, forms an important

[35] Phaed. 66. e. [i. p. 65]. Hence also Plato sets so high a virtue on science, in opposition to the New Platonists, who pretended that they learned more by their exstasies.

[36] Conv. 202. d. sq. 203. a. [iii. pp. 533–4]. Epin. 984. c. [vi. p. 22]. Cf. Proclus Theol. Plat. 1, 12; 5, 23, etc.

difference between New Platonism and the Platonic Philosophy. For, while the former is radically of a bastard and cosmopolitan character, the latter, as we saw, presents itself as a genuine production of the Hellenic and Attic mind.

The contest of New Platonism with Christianity must, naturally, have operated powerfully in the divergence of the former from the peculiarities of Platonism. For, since the former unfolded itself in a different opposition to Christianity from the latter, it necessarily also took different directions, developed and set forth other dogmas. And, since Christianity, notwithstanding its relationship to Platonism, possesses, nevertheless, germs and parts which differ from it throughout, New Platonism was necessitated, as it wished to be equal, and even beforehand with Christianity, to provide itself with surrogates, which were wholly incompatible with the original essence of Platonism.

Moreover, in this very contest of New Platonism with Christianity, lies a strong confirmation of the universal assumption, that there were Christian elements in the old Platonic way of thinking. For the opinion, that it also could give to the world what Christianity wished to afford it, was the chief motive of the New Platonists in this contest; and although, on the one hand, by additions and false renderings, they often transformed Platonism till it was irrecognizable, yet, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that they were zealous to adopt its entire contents, and supported the new scion on the old stock.

Thus approximately must the partly kindred and partly antagonistic relation between Platonism and New Platonism be apprehended and conceived of; and thus it will become clear, that it is entirely incorrect to suppose extravagance and fanaticism to be characteristic of the Platonic Philosophy, because they stand out plainly enough as the chief peculiarity of New Platonism.

Let us now turn to the calumniation of Plato, which proceeded from Aristotle, or, at least, found its principal support

in him. For twenty years did Aristotle, one of the clearest and sharpest critics that ever lived, enjoy Plato's instruction. He has, consequently, the double presumption in his favour in judging the Platonic system, of fundamental knowledge of it and adequate ability. How then, does the great Aristotle decide concerning the almost deified Plato? Most unfavourably. He corrects him, directs against him his polemics and persiflage;[37] and although he agrees with him in several points, and even in some cases though proceeding from quite opposite points, arrives at the same results, yet the systems of these men are so entirely different in their whole spirit and structure, that their relation to each other can only be regarded and designated as that of polarity.

Now, if Aristotle was necessitated, on philosophical grounds, to contradict Plato so variously, and to strike out quite a different path in order to obtain a tenable system of philosophy, we must then indeed believe that Plato wandered from the truth, and erected his system on a foundation which is deficient in real strength. And so that old charge, brought by Aristotle himself, will be found correct, that Plato *poetizes* more than he *thinks*,[38] and that the soaring-power of his fancy conferred those lines of argument which should have proceeded from rational insight, and ought to have been supported on definite conceptions.

From views and expressions such as these have proceeded, as is well known, the most violent contests between Platonists and Aristotelians. This is not the place for their history. But we must seek to inquire into and apprehend the point of reconciliation between these intense antagonisms, in order that from this we may apprehend, without hindrance, the greatness of both heroes, and thereby, at the same time restore the injured philosophic dignity of Plato.

[37] Anal. post. 1. 11, 19., Nat. ausc. 4, 4. Eth. Eud. 2, 8. Eth. Nic. 1, 4. Met. 1, 7. 3. 2; 7. 14–16; 8, 6; 11, 4. 5. 12. (in the Paris ed. of Arist. 1654).

[38] Arist. Met. 11, 5.

The oft renewed contests between Platonists and Aristotelians could not lead to peace and a good understanding, because each party proceeded mainly on the principle of destroying the authority of their opponents. The Platonists laboured to depreciate Aristotle, and the Aristotelians were zealously engaged in disparaging Plato. And both failed of their object. Plato's greatness remained as undiminished as that of Aristotle. Accordingly, if insight in this relation is to be rendered possible, it must be firmly held through all the future, that it is absolute perverseness and folly to consider the estimation and recognition of the one impossible without the neglecting of the other. We can only arrive at a proper judgment concerning both, by proceeding on the clear consciousness of the *equal necessity* and *equal value* of both.

But how can we arrive at this consciousness?

First, by regarding the equally noble and widely extended influence of both men on the intellectual department of life.

Plato and Aristotle stand in antiquity, like the pillars of Hercules, beyond which it was not granted to the spirit of inquiry of the ancient world to proceed; and they will remain for all time, the axes, around which all speculative powers and interests will for ever collect and revolve. All philosophizing belongs, in its meaning and spirit, either more to the Platonic or more to the Aristotelian school; and a philosophy could scarcely arise which should contain in itself both antitheses in perfectly equal proportions.

This importance of both systems, which is continued to the present, with equal strength, gives us reason to conclude that both are equally valuable and equally necessary to the great course of history of intellectual development.

This will be seen more definitely by the following consideration.

If we would correctly judge the intellectually great, and weigh them against each other, we must proceed on the biblical principle, as decidedly the most correct, of judging the indi-

vidualities; we must learn to apprehend and estimate after the analogy of the Creator, 'everything after its kind' (Gen. i. 21). Accordingly, we must not bring to our judgment of Plato the silly presumption, that he is to think and write like Aristotle; and we must not ineptly require of Aristotle, that he shall possess and present Platonic ideas. Let us rather allow each of them to influence us, as he is, then we cannot fail to receive from each the full impression of the good and excellent *after its kind.* If we allow each the same right of being construed from his own stand-point and his own principles, as to his philosophical knowledge, we must then confess, that each after his kind has accomplished that which can scarcely be surpassed.

But this designation: Each after his kind—includes and plainly expresses a certain one-sidedness of each, a certain restrictedness to that which suits him best. Each of them attained the summit of excellence by seizing and toiling with his whole energy after that only which was most in accordance with his own idiosyncracy; neither of them would have become great as a model, if he had not moved exclusively in the sphere most congenial to him. This exclusiveness is therefore not a subject of reproach, but of commendation. For this is the condition of all creaturely performances in the production of the solid and excellent. In vain does an instinct, led astray by vanity, toil to attain the goal of perfection which is not set for it, but to which genius easily leads another.

Consequently, it is clear, that however excellent and solid is the Platonic Philosophy, and not less so that of Aristotle, yet each of them is so only because it is *not*, and has *not* what the other *is* and *has;* each shows to the beholder a peculiar excellence which is wanting to the other. Since now both have arisen not only together, with or after each other, and have maintained themselves continually in equal respect and influence, but since each also, regarded in itself, lays well-founded claims to an equal degree of recognition of its peculiar great-

ness, it is then certain, being proved by the facts, that for philosophy in general they are of equal value and of equal necessity, but that the Aristotelian philosophy would not at all have arisen nor have equalled the Platonic in its powerful agency, if the Platonic were to be regarded as the fullest, most comprehensive, and most correct expression of philosophy in general. But each presents only *one* side and tendency of general philosophical knowledge and endeavour; and neither in Aristotelianism nor in Platonism has this knowledge completely culminated or arrived at the perfection and rounding out of all its parts.

From this objective relation of the philosophers to science and the history of the world, is to be best explained the subjective relation which existed between their authors. This was, as we have remarked, by no means a friendly one. Granted that most of the anecdotes relating to their reciprocal hostility were invented, yet it cannot be denied that they were accustomed to treat each other with a certain coldness and irony. This is quite intelligible after what has been adduced above. Both were, on account of their opposite tendencies and tasks, entirely incapable of estimating each other in the true sense of the word. Aristotle did not understand Plato, and Plato could hardly have understood Aristotle, if he had read his writings.

This opinion will be offensive to many. How, it will be asked, does it harmonize, that Plato and Aristotle are called the greatest philosophers, and yet are declared to be incapable of estimating and understanding each other? And how can it be said, especially of Aristotle, that he spoke so unfavourably of the Platonic philosophy, from a mere want of understanding of it? how can this be said of him, who, it is acknowledged, possessed a most acute and penetrating intellect?

This objection or scruple will vanish immediately so soon as we recognize the simple, but for the history of science, highly important truth: that every mind can only understand, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, that which it is in a condition organically to produce and reproduce in itself. This

living shooting or flashing up of a foreign idea in one's own innermost consciousness is the proper understanding, all else is an understanding only of shadows and words, not an intellectual sense of the substance on which they depend. To understand is of two kinds. The words, which Paul has written, any scholar may learn to translate and comment on; but he cannot and may not say that he has thus understood Paul; for no one can do this, who does not bear within him a Pauline mind and spirit. It would be far better for our Exegesis and Theology, if theologians would bring themselves to do homage to this truth.

Aristotle saw and apprehended always only the non-Aristotelian element in Plato; that which was properly Platonic remained to him intellectually foreign and unfathomed; for, had it formed itself livingly within his consciousness, his consciousness must have ceased to be organized and conditioned as Aristotelian, and must have become one like the Platonic. Aristotle could not have become a Platonizing thinker, even if he had desired it. But he did not at all, and should not have desired it. For, had he done so, he would have sinned against himself and the spirit of history. His task, which he had to perform for history, was quite different to that of Plato; his highest endeavour ought to be to fulfil *his* vocation, to accomplish *his* task. Now, the more zealous and faithful he was in this endeavour, the farther must he remove from the stand-point and endeavour of Plato, since the spirit of science was to work in and through him exactly that side of philosophy from which Plato had withdrawn. Recognizing in his clear mind, both that the cultivation of this side was highly important and essential, and also that this side of knowledge was only indicated in Platonism, and appeared, so to speak, only as an undeveloped rudiment, the neglect of that which seemed to him most important, could not fail to vex him somewhat, and to lead him to pronounce an unfavourable judgment on Plato's philosophical performances. It was not a mere paltry self-sufficiency which produced his in part harsh criticism of Platonism; it was rather the proper feeling of his own great-

ness, capacity, and obligation. For, every one who accomplishes the excellent in his kind, can properly have no other or higher idea of the excellent, than that according to which he himself labours and creates; because, that which he does would not be excellent if formed according to another, and not his own conception of excellence. Hence also, every master will silently expect or desire, that all who wish to do something perfect, will do it, as he does. Even Goethe and Schiller, though they took so much pains to procure for and to do justice to each other, could never entirely free themselves from silent assumptions of this kind. Schiller thought the poetry of Goethe would be much grander and more excellent if it were a little more Schillerish; and Goethe, on his side, was not less of opinion that Schiller's performances would prove much better and more solid if they had more of Goethe in them; and the whole dispute between the friends of Schiller and Goethe arises from nothing else but an inflexible maintenance and blind pursuit of these easily explained and pardonable, but still entirely unallowable, requisitions. Palm-branches are not to be broken off from cedar-stocks, and Schiller is as little to be blamed for not writing like Goethe, as Plato is to be reproached for not preaching Aristotelianism.

The understanding which we have in this manner obtained in respect of the misunderstanding between Aristotle and Plato can by no means however, as it now lies before us, be considered complete and satisfactory. This it can only be, when it has passed over from the abstract and general, as we now have it, into the concrete, and into the sphere of a distinct conception. This transition, we have now to effect or attempt; how the attempt is to be made is sufficiently indicated in the task itself. We must have a more special and definite perception than heretofore, of the reason and necessity why Aristotle did not properly understand Plato; we must also see more clearly that Plato's philosophical importance or greatness has suffered no essential abatement by the partially unfavourable criticisms of Aristotle, and that, consequently, those are in error who suppose that the

prejudices, which are still prevalent among us against the philosophical value of Platonism, have a firm basis in the authority of Aristotle. Both these will ensue so soon as the thorough heterogeneity of the two men is presented in clear and individual traits, as the proximate reason of the existing misunderstanding, and so soon as the indefinite notion, that they strove, and that necessarily, after entirely opposite ends in philosophy, has been changed into a tangible fact. The effort to obtain more definite knowledge, on these points, lies so near to the chief object of our task—to discover the Christian element in Plato,—that every advance in this examination is, at the same time, an approximation to our goal.

Rixner calls Aristotle Plato reversed; and this title may be justified in more than one respect.

Plato's manner of writing must be considered highly finished; style seems almost entirely neglected in Aristotle, and we may say *purposely*. Aristotle wishes to form a contrast to Plato in this respect; and not from mere whim, but from philosophical reasons. The creative spirit of Platonism requires the sensuous beauty of language; the sober criticism of Aristotle forbids it.

Plato is richly gifted with genial fancy; in Aristotle this is entirely wanting; in the former, genius, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, is the most distinguished element; a most eminent and sound understanding characterizes the latter; hence, with the former, thought enters the regions of the supernatural and mystical; while, with the latter, it remains throughout rationalistic.

Plato finds his highest joy in the whole and the unit; Aristotle in the mass and abundance of sharply defined particulars; the former raises himself above nature, the latter sinks himself into her and into the observation of real objects; the former desires to contemplate and to be happy in pure contemplation; the latter wishes to learn,[39] and by ever learning something new,

[39] Arist. Met. 1, 1. The main difference between Plato and Aristotle

to afford himself unceasing pleasure; an insatiable appetite urges him to collect knowledge and ideas, and every satisfaction of this appetite affords him the highest enjoyment.[40]

Plato's philosophy proceeds from certainty;[41] that of Aristotle aims to attain it; in the former it forms the initial point and origin of all knowledge, in the latter it is to be its final point, and is to be shown to be the basis of knowledge; the philosophy of Plato mirrors the clearest and most joyous conviction; the philosophy of Aristotle presents a series of investigations, ending in shrugging of the shoulders and resignation. Plato testifies of and to the truth; Aristotle, ever unsatisfied, seeks and inquires after it; that which exists for the former, the latter desires to prove to exist, without being able to do so!

Plato has to do with the *essential;* Aristotle with the *causal;* in the former, the contents and subject are the most important, in the latter the form and method. Platonism is the unity of all that was known by the ancient world; from Aristotle proceeded the laws of scientific inquiry for all time and all disciplines; Plato perfects and glorifies life; Aristotle founds and rules the school; with Plato the development period of the philosophical mind closes on the stage of synthesis of being and activity; with Aristotle begins the retrogressive course of independent analysis,[42] through all being and activity, in the sphere of reflection.

Plato philosophizes in the interest and in favour of sentiment; all philosophizing is hence for him only a means to an end; for Aristotle philosophizing is an end in itself, and he purposely rends asunder the living bond between opinion and

may be rendered plain by tracing it to the two conceptions of *science* and *truth*. These words have a totally different meaning in the two authors.

[40] Plato called Aristotle, merely the *Reader*.

[41] Rep. 7, 518. c. [ii. p. 206, sq.]

[42] The expressions Synthesis and Analysis must not be understood as referring chiefly or exclusively to the so-called synthetic and analytic methods, for then it will be said that each used both. Here it is meant only that Aristotle *dissects* and *anatomizes*, while Plato produces that which is *organic* and *living* in the world of mind.

knowledge; in Platonism the religious element is innate, and properly the living germ from which its whole life is developed, Aristotle, in his elaborately finished scientific edifice, has constructed for himself a kind of theology, but of empty names and conceptions.

These are neither new nor unproved propositions; they have often been laid down, furnished with complete proofs, in the archives of philosophy and its history. The same thoughts may be found there as here, only otherwise expressed. Whether other thinkers have apprehended more sharply the essentiality of this heterogeneity which has been discussed, and have expressed it more distinctly, by calling Plato the philosopher of the reason, Aristotle that of the understanding; by describing the former as proceeding from the unconditioned to the conditioned, and the latter the reverse; by characterizing Platonism as intellectualism, and Aristotelianism as empiricism, or numbering Plato among the idealists, and Aristotle among the realist, etc. etc., this remains to be decided by the critical acumen of the reader, we will only add in conclusion to this attempted characterization, the clear, and in the main, highly successful presentation of what has been said above, in which Goethe has portrayed the two heroes of philosophy and their merits.

'Plato is related to the world as a spirit of the blest, who is pleased for a time to be its guest. It is not so much his object to become acquainted with it, because he already presupposes it, as in a friendly manner to communicate that which he brings with him, and which is so necessary to it. He penetrates the depths more to fill them with his own being than to investigate them. He raises himself to the heights with longing again to participate in his original. All that he utters has reference to an eternal whole, good, true, beautiful, whose claim he strives to excite in every bosom. That which he appropriates to himself in particulars of worldly knowledge, dissolves, we might say, evaporates, in his method, in his statement.

'Aristotle, on the other hand, stands related to the world as a

man, as a master-builder. Since he is here, here will he do and work. He inquires with reference to the ground, but only until he finds a good foundation to all the rest. From this to the middle of the earth, he is indifferent. He draws around an immense foundation-circle for his edifice, procures materials from all sides, arranges them, piles them up, and thus mounts on high in regular pyramidal form, while Plato seeks the sky like an obelisk or pointed flame.'[43]

It must now have become more evident than before, how it was, and could not be otherwise, that Aristotle found no special pleasure in the philosophy of Plato, and censured that most which he understood least. That which Plato expressed as recognized truth, never came into the sight of Aristotle, because he never looked whither Plato's eyes were unintermittingly directed, and because that never revealed itself to his differently organized vision, which shone first into the eye of Plato's mind. How then could Aristotle concede to Plato, that he enounced the truth, when he spoke of things, which, *for him*, did not exist!

The doctrine of Ideas forms the kernel of the Platonic philosophy; Aristotle's strongest polemic is directed against these ideas, and he is happy in the illusion that he has proved most convincingly their emptiness and absolute untenableness.[44] But in fact, by his war of extermination against them, he has destroyed nothing but the coarse vessel of clay which his somewhat clumsy imagination had made of the Platonic ideas. Aristotle, seeking and seeing nothing but conceptions and *causes*, apprehended the ideas of Plato in no other than the conceptional form of the causal, and thus he certainly could not fail of acquiring a strong detestation of these logical spectres.

[43] Raphael has well characterized the two philosophers in his School at Athens, by representing Plato as gazing with enthusiasm towards heaven, Aristotle as looking down sharply to the earth.

[44] Anal. post. 1, 19. Cf. Eth. Nio. 1, 4. Met. 1, 7, etc. Diogenes also made himself merry over Plato's Ideas. Diog. La. 6, 53. Cf. the apology for Plato's Ideas against the attacks of Aristotle, by Atticus, in Euseb. Praep. Ev. 15, 13.

That with which one is occupied, sticks to him, says the proverb, Plato could not become free of the divine, Aristotle of the natural. The physics of Plato are, so to speak, a condensed theology; and the metaphysics of Aristotle are, in truth, nothing else than attenuated sublimated physics.

However much also Plato and Aristotle labour to apprehend and present both the former and the latter, yet it cannot be denied that the divine in one, and the natural in the other, is a little deficient; in Plato the reality, in Aristotle the idea. Plato is too much abstracted from the many, by reflecting on the one; and Aristotle cannot, by his whole power, raise himself to the whole, because he has allowed himself too deeply in the consideration of the particular; in the former the world, in the latter heaven, is wanting in inward truth; in Plato the earthly, and in Aristotle the divine, has an existence more of word and thought than of substance and fact.

Hence is manifest the high value and absolute necessity of the Aristotelian antagonism to Plato; and we know what was the historical significance of the development in Plato and Aristotle, of two equally great and indispensable, but yet opposite intellectual tendencies. And still more instinctively in a *practical* than in a *theoretic* regard, may be perceived, the infinitely important service which Aristotle has to render to the world; and this side of the relation, the most important in itself generally, and for our object especially, has been least regarded and examined in previous discussions. We will, in a few words, set it in as clear a light as possible.

The highest perfection of man and mind is conceivable only in and with freedom, or it consists rather in the true liberty which is identical with eternal life. All, therefore, which hinders the mind in its freedom, in the great whole of humanity as in individual men, which fixes and crystallizes it, renders it biassed and captivates it, becomes an idol to it, beyond which it thinks and desires nothing; this is, of course, injurious, and an hindrance to that perfection. Now, not only the bad may become such an

hindrance to the mind, but also the good; and the latter, when it becomes the fetter of the mind, is much more difficult to break and overcome than the former. This, alas! few recognize or comprehend. And hence comes the most dangerous part of the misfortune of our times. Men, rendered enthusiastic by the glories of culture and civilization, imagine that it only needs to be removed from the base, rude, bad, immoral, and stupid, and an unceasing progress to the rational and divine will follow of itself. They do not see that the beautiful and good is just so much the more dangerous to mental freedom and improvement the purer, nobler, and more splendid is the form in which it appears, and, if they are told this, they do not believe it. And yet, daily experience teaches that it is far more difficult to convert a man, who is proud of his virtue, than a vicious man; and that it is much easier to lead a publican than a scribe from his ignorance.

It is just the intellectually sublime and excellent which causes the greatest danger to the educational course of men and of humanity, by producing a lively and noble, but also easily biassing enthusiasm, to which the high passes for the highest.

This danger was connected with Platonism more than with any other system. For the undying spirit of philosophy had never crystallized more gloriously or ideally than in it. We cannot deny, also, the paralyzing effects of its heavenly splendour on the souls of men. The Platonic ideas have become to many, both in ancient and modern times, what lime-twigs are to birds. They cannot get away from them, and thus lose the free movement of their minds. It was, therefore, quite necessary that the criticism of Aristotle should rise in opposition to the Platonic enthusiasm, and counteract its centrifugal tendency by centripetal force, in order to preserve to the human mind its imperilled circumspection, and to keep open for it the way to freedom.

Woe to the world, if it ever succeeds, in entirely overthrowing the high-priesthood of genuine Platonism in the province of

the intellect, in order to worship as its only deities, the golden calves, which it has itself made of the empirical materials and notional forms of Aristotelianism! but woe to it not less, if, opposed to the divine spiritual life of the Platonic world-consciousness, the critical master power and activity of the Aristotelian matter-of-fact common sense ceases to be influential.

'Who then are Plato and Aristotle? They are ministers, as the Lord gave to every man.' (1 Cor. iii. 5.)

CHAPTER II.

HINTS FOR A LIVING PERCEPTION OF PLATO'S GREATNESS.

HAVING proceeded negatively in our valuation of Plato, we must now treat the subject positively. We have laboured to remove the hindrances which stand in the way of the apprehension of his true greatness and importance, and must now seek a point of view from which this greatness will be clearly seen by us. And this the more, because we greatly need a lively impression thereof in order to attain our proper object. We wish to apprehend the Christian element in Plato and his philosophy. The conception of this, however, is so nearly related to the conception of the truly great and significant, that, in general, we speedily and safely attain the former through the latter. Especially is this the case with Plato, in whom the Christian element everywhere gleams through that which causes him to appear great.

Complete knowledge of the greatness of a man and of his mind, proceeds principally from a twofold consideration, viz., of his achievements and of his means. In order to obtain a complete consciousness of Plato's world-historic greatness, we must accordingly seek first to obtain a comprehensive idea of what he effected; and then, secondly, by what means he accomplished these things; through what inward and outward conditions he has become, that which he was and is. If we wish to know the former, we must turn our eyes away from him to that which, at his time and subsequently, resembled his performances; we must go to work, measuring and weighing, distinguishing and

comparing; for the degree of greatness can only be decided by considering several great men together. To acquire a knowledge of the latter, we must look from him to the times antecedent, and then into his own mind, and regard the exciting and furthering influences from without and within, as well as the restrictions and unfavourable circumstances with which he had to contend both within and without himself.

What an entirely different judgment, than at present, should we be in a condition to pronounce concerning Plato, if there had been a thorough and satisfactory discussion of these points; if the relation of Platonism, not merely to the philosophy of his time and ours, but also to the history of the education of the human mind, and of humanity in general, had been measured and defined; if the Platonic philosophy had been presented clearly in its genetic relation to the ancient heathen world, to Orientalism on one side and Hellenism on the other, and especially to Atticism; if a picture were before us in which we could see Plato, the Greek, the man, the philosopher; if we could learn, with the utmost possible accuracy, the unfolding of his ideas from his own mental organization, from his studies and experiences, and from other fertilizing influences!

But a construing of the conception of Plato's greatness of so comprehensive a character, would far surpass the limits of our present task and of our powers. We must and shall content ourselves with a few hints, which may perhaps incite to further investigations. But we shall certainly take care that our perception of Plato's greatness, however incomplete it may be, or become, is a *living* one.

To a living perception stands opposed the dead reception of an idea which is, as it were, forced upon us. That perception is a living one which is connected with a clear intellectual sense of the matter which is treated of. Only that which from a previously quickened point of it, clearly and perceptibly penetrates the whole life of our consciousness, can we call a true learning and understanding.

Let us, accordingly, endeavour to strike that point of our consciousness, in which, from a pregnant living impression, the presentiment of Plato's greatness is ever more clearly and strongly developed.

The feeling of extraordinary greatness will scarcely be the first impression which Plato will produce on us at our first acquaintance with him. It is, generally, rather the feeling of disappointed expectation. For the impression of subjects which have been long commended to us, as great and noble, is usually far below the conceptions with which we come to their contemplation. Many, indeed, are unwilling to confess this, either to themselves or to others, being ashamed that they have regarded coldly and without feeling, that concerning which others express themselves with warmth and rapture; and this false shame thus becomes only too easily a source of insincerity towards others and towards themselves. They pretend to feelings before themselves and others which they have not experienced.

We take up Plato's writings with no small expectations. How intent are we already on the enjoyment, which the style, so celebrated from antiquity, is to afford us! Have we not early and often heard him called the Attic Bee? Is there not connected with this name, the remembrance of the pretty fable of the swarm of bees, which, in Hymettus, alighted on the lips of the sleeping boy?[1] Was it not a proverb among the ancients —among those who may certainly be considered able to judge in this respect, that Zeus, if he had wished to speak Greek, would have spoken like Plato?[2]

Yet the celebrated beauty of the Platonic style, will scarcely be evident, at first view, to an unprepossessed mind. A certain delicacy, fulness, strength, and liveliness of expression cannot,

[1] Val. Max. 1, 6. Plin. H. N. 11. 9.

[2] Amm. Marc. 22, 16. Cic. Or. 3, 19. Cf. de Orat. 1, 11; 3, 34, etc. He was also, on account of the beauty of his representations, called the Homer of philosophers. Cic. Tusc. 1, 32. Cf. on his style Quint. Inst. 10, 1.

indeed, be denied to it; but it will not generally produce the high satisfaction which it promised, and, in many particulars, it will appear little praiseworthy. Especially displeasing will often be a certain apparently unnecessary diffuseness, so that not wholly incorrect, it will be thought, were those among Plato's contemporaries who censured and opposed him, by deriving his name from the diffuseness of his diction and style.[3]

The Socratic method of conversation also, of which the Platonic dialogues are considered the originals and models, does not entirely correspond with the expectations entertained with respect to it by many. Our modern Catechists deem it a fault, when questions are so put, that they can be answered only with Yes or No. And for whole pages, we hear nothing from those with whom the Socrates of Plato speaks, but the briefest forms of affirmation or denial. We frequently, indeed, meet with really unsurpassable developments of ideas, which highly delight us by their measured and direct, but clear and lively progress; —as, for example, the dialogue on the possibility of teaching virtue in the Protagoras, on the proof of the proposition, that it is better to suffer than to do wrong in the Gorgias, and the questioning out of the mathematical theorem in the Meno, etc. etc.; but it cannot be denied, that in many dialogues, nothing is developed, and that the answerers are merely in a state of listening and agreeing, and therefore passive.

And if the method of presentation, at least in the beginning of our acquaintance with it, rather lowers than raises our opinion of Plato, this must be still more the case on consideration of the subjects which are treated of in the dialogues. For if one has heard Plato praised as a most profound and ingenious thinker, he prepares himself for the discussion of the most profound and important questions, and hopes to receive disclosures concerning the highest and most interesting problems. Now, he certainly finds in Plato's works very beautiful and

[3] Diog. La. Vit. Plat. His proper name was Aristocles. Another derivation of *Plato* occurs in Athen. Deipn. 11, p. 505.

luminous thoughts concerning the Divine ordering of the world, the nobility and worth of virtue, the immortality of the soul, and its happiness in the pure contemplation of the divine and eternal; but these things are for the most part placed in the dim distance, instead of occupying the foreground of the examinations, and a larger part of the dialogues does not refer immediately to these but to common subjects, and those which lie nearer to common life.[4] To him who betakes himself to the study of Plato from the schools and the works of our philosophers, it will seem not a little strange to find, instead of purely metaphysical and speculative discussions, extended conversations on the value of style in rhetorical productions, on courage and temperance, on the use of language and etymology, on friendship and love, etc. These treatises have certainly their interest, but do not afford and reveal, as it seems, that wisdom which one expected and was justified in expecting from the world-renowed philosopher.

The disappointment is greater because almost the whole of the dialogues reach no satisfactory conclusion or lead to no clear and tractable result, as Cicero has already remarked in complaint. The greater part of the conversations break off just where the discussion is most attractive, and where one is hoping for the complete solution of the appointed task. The speakers, after long turns hither and thither in the discourse, still come to no end, and seem, in spite of all their attempts to seize the true idea, to have enriched and extended their consciousness by nothing, except the clear perception of their own ignorance, and the untenableness of their previous strange

[4] Even the Bible disappoints many readers. For many expect from a book which is called a Divine revelation, the communication of extraordinary disclosures, and the satisfaction of their speculative curiosity. When then they find that the Bible gives little direct instruction concerning divine things, but, on the other hand, many historical relations of apparently insignificant circumstances, they are put out of humour, and will neither believe it nor acknowledge it, as containing a revelation. Cf. on this point *Hamann's* Werke. 1, p. 72.

opinions. Now it is not at all delightful for an inquiring disposition, intent on true instruction, to go away with the feeling only more definite than before, of the vacuity of his mind. One feels in this respect probably the same discomfort, as, when seeking something in the night, the light is extinguished just at that moment when it was most necessary and would have afforded most assistance.

Now, whether it be these things or others which excite a certain uncomfortable or angry frame of mind in him who with joyful anticipations enters the Platonic Academy; enough, it is no less natural than, as we shall soon see, easy of explanation, that we should at first feel ourselves by no means perfectly satisfied and edified by Plato. For it is the same with the taste for intellectual excellencies as it is with the sensuous taste for so-called delicacies. To him who partakes of them for the first time, they have not an agreeable flavour: he only knows how to estimate their value, when, by repeated use of them, he has cultivated the right capacity of taste for such things.

But as the sun, when it has reached its lowest point in the winter, mounts gradually again to its summer elevation and power, so will our mind also raise itself from that critical depreciation to a gradually increasing knowledge and feeling of the truly great in Plato, if indeed, it possesses sufficient loyalty to reason to endure calmly and to overcome the first unfavourable impressions. For it is one of the greatest evils of our time, which praises reason with words, but mocks her with deeds, that men think they must honour not *her* fidelity, but the capriciousness of the mere understanding, and must bring to this all the offerings which it despotically demands. The boasted strength of our critical understanding consists frequently in nothing else but its inward weakness and inability to withstand; being incapable of maintaining its opposition to the first strong impressions of so-called evident truths, it gives up to pressing doubts all that they will snatch away from it, and seeks cunningly to disguise its inability to dismiss them duly

under the appearance of a severely testing procedure, which has proved the untenableness of that which was unhesitatingly resigned. That all divine truth, as Goethe strikingly remarks, is, and from its nature must be, opposed to some of our previous notions, is either directly denied or disregarded and forgotten.

What then above all else can raise again, and revive in the reader, who is thus put out of humour, his abated joy in Plato?

We, as a nation, have much natural disposition for the earnest and moral. And thus, the moral earnestness of Plato is especially adapted to produce a beneficial effect on us. We have already above (p. 59), regarded duly the nobility of his soul, the severity and purity of his disposition, and his earnestness and zeal for all that is beautiful and for God; and we need, therefore, to think only of his moral love for the highest good of our life, and of the bold and manly scorn which flashes from his eyes when he opposes the bad and base, in order to effect, in our minds, a favourable change of views concerning him.

To this first little nucleus of admiration or acknowledgment of the *moral* greatness of Plato are soon added other elements from which is formed a better conception of his greatness as an author and a philosopher.

He who, in a susceptible hour and frame of mind, is delighted by the full fresh view of that incomparable picture which Plato has drawn in the Phaedrus of the span of steeds in the heavenly life of the soul,[5] and who gives himself up entirely, with undivided and unbiassed soul, to the impression which the wonderfully brilliant, and yet so mysterious splendour of this picture is capable of producing, will he not feel himself powerfully attracted, and his whole soul penetrated, as if by spirit and fire? Will he not, the more he strives to explain

[5] Phaedr. 246, b. sq. [i. p. 322]. The picture is doubtless drawn with reference to certain passages in Homer, Il. 1. 423; 16, 145; 17, 443; 24, 277, etc.

this feeling and to restore his clear self-consciousness, become so much the more inwardly astonished at the materials and powers which co-operated most happily in this production of the Platonic mind, so as to produce such strong and harmonious vibrations of thought in all sympathetic souls of all centuries.

The lofty flight of Platonic enthusiasm, of which we have heard so variously,—here we feel its living presence and power. The poetic exuberance and beauty of his language, which seemed to us to be wanting in many passages of his works,—here meets us in its full glory. The spiritual depth of his thoughts, by which we did not feel ourselves attracted everywhere in his writings,—here it at once reveals to us its scarcely fathomable riches.

What a successful overture is to a good piece of music, that the Phaedrus is to Plato's works. If we are clearly conscious of the sense and spirit of this dialogue, we shall soon see our way clearly in the region of Platonic spirit and striving, and shall learn to appreciate its peculiar excellencies. For the more deeply we penetrate into the contents of the Phaedrus, the more clearly shall we perceive also, that it is by no means either the lofty enthusiasm or the poetically beautiful diction, exclusively or principally, which so uncommonly attracts the reader of this dialogue. Did our feeling proceed first or exclusively from these causes, it would be rather a fleeting ebullition than an increasing satisfaction of the mind. But it is the latter. However much the *heart* may be warmed in favour of this youthful effusion of a wealthy mind, and may testify of its beauties; the *intellect*, and the calm and thoughtful consideration of it, afford no less speaking testimony.

With all the fire and soaring of thought—what keeping and presence of mind! Amid this stream and rush of images, what a clear and circumspect train of thought! With the deep earnestness of that ancient myth and philosopheme, what a fresh charm and grace in the presentation! In these poems of the fancy, what truth! what nature! It is impossible that the

mental condition of those who have been caught and struck by love should be represented by any art or language more faithfully, vivaciously, or truly, than it is done in the Phaedrus. It is as though the lover himself had apprehended and revealed his own most inward consciousness.

And is it then merely the faithful mirroring of a purely human feeling, which gives this dialogue the inward truth with which it interests our mind? Does it not awake a strain in our breast, which is often, indeed, long silent and sometimes even seems to have died out entirely within us, but, which once roused, not only continually sounds through our whole inner life, but is recognised by us with joyful certainty as the key-note of our soul and of our true being. The soul is very willing to hear of its celestial origin, and it knows and feels also, whenever this is spoken of to it in the right manner, that this discourse is the purest truth, however poetical and mysterious it may otherwise appear.

If now, after so powerful and permanent impressions, we come to a close study of the works of Plato, we gradually find that they really possess the high excellencies which have been attributed to them in ancient and modern times. If we compare, with regard to the style and mode of presentation, the last and ripest work of Plato's mind, with his first and most soaring, the Republic with the Phaedrus, we cannot avoid, notwithstanding all the poetic splendour of the latter, placing the Republic higher than it as to style. For the Republic possesses all the beauties of that youthful production, without its faults. In this the fire of intellect, which created the former, still glows unenfeebled. The richest images still stream from the fresh springs of fancy. The discourse still moves on in secure progress, with unconstrained grace. But, while there the flight of thought approached in part the eccentric, here it moves in more uniform circumspection, without however being deficient in inward power of soaring. If in the former, the splendour of the presentation and the expression here and there passed into the luxurious, it

here appears in sustained moderation, without becoming dull, poor, or slender. And still more substantial and concrete here than there stand out persons, world-relations, and characters; with not less clearness and convincing power are the most important occasions of life here spoken of, the most significant points and questions discussed.

But between the Republic and the Phaedrus, what a respectable series of solid productions of Plato's authorship! They bear in themselves, as a whole, with the exception of the spurious and interpolated, the marks of genuine classics; as we cannot longer deny, if by an earnest study of the ancients in general, and of Plato in particular, we more and more forget the false views and tendencies of taste, which have, for the most part, become prevalent in our modern literature, and do more or less influence us all.

The diction of Plato's works is beautiful and rich, yet properly without parade and not overladen with ornament, and it maintains in almost all his writings an uniform dignity and finish. The presentation is not lame and flat in one passage, in order to soar up all the more vivaciously in the others: it does not enrich and beautify the particulars at the cost of the whole. Plato never devotes himself, like so many favourite authors of our public, to bribe the 'monological interests' of the reader, and to gain them, by interesting sentences, popular common-places, or showy descriptions. What at first was displeasing as a certain diffuseness, is seen, on closer consideration, to be a peculiarity founded in the nature of conversation, which serves, moreover, the philosophical purpose of a thorough and all-sided discussion of difficult subjects.[6] It is always by motives derived from reason and the matter in hand, that Plato allows his styles to be guided: he never, from vanity or one-sided prejudice, allows himself in certain piquant sayings and

[6] See what Plato himself says in justification of this breadth Theaet. 172. e. 195. b. [i. pp. 407, 435-6], but especially Polit. 264. a. 286. c, d. [ii. pp. 200. 236–7].

thoughts, nor permits his words and thoughts to be dictated by sudden ebullitions of fancy. Least of all, however, is book-making, as it is carried on, especially at the present day, in great perfection and universality, the matter which he has at heart. He does not write for the sake of writing or of delighting in what he has written, or to acquire renown as an author, and an imperishable name: he did not regard authorship as his proper or highest vocation, but to operate intellectually through the living word, and by making his whole life his deed and doctrine. He values all writings but little in comparison with this: the written is, in his view, dead and poor, if it has not been previously penetrated with the breath of an allied soul; and it was not so much to diffuse his wisdom and teaching in the world by his books, as to rouse susceptible souls here and there, and incite them to a new perception of the eternally true and beautiful, that he wished to embody, in dead letters, the sparks and germs of ideas of his mind.[7]

Where then has Plato his equal in a literary respect and as to style, his purpose being the same? Are literary phenomena so frequent that we might place them immediately by his side? Do we find, even in our best authors, such sterling qualities throughout, as in him? Can we, in the case of all those authors who, in the youthful fire of enthusiasm obtained consideration by their ravishing compositions, commend them as we can Plato, because their gift of presentation has become more classic with increasing age? Are not the talents of many authors like rockets, which, with sudden flight rise shining into the sky, but are lost again as quickly in the darkness of the night? Is it not the case with many who write a so-called beautiful style, that this style is rather one made up and adopted than one produced by the impression of the subject, and that has grown out of the innermost life of one's own mind? The celebrated saying of the great Buffon, 'Le style,

[7] Phaedr. 274. c. sq. [i. p. 255]. A passage highly characteristic of Plato's peculiar way of thinking.

c'est l'homme!' does not, in fact, admit of so perfect and pregnant an application to all writers as to Plato.

How distinguished as to his manner of writing does Plato stand, especially among philosophers. There have been none before or after him who have excelled him in this. Only a few can be named who have emulated, with a happy result, his method of presenting philosophical ideas. Very many, especially among our recent philosophers, wrote in a language which cannot be called sensible, much less aesthetically perfect and classic.

But when we have learnt to perceive, and eventually also to feel, that his style is excellent, which even his enemies have almost always reluctantly admitted, we have still gained but little towards a living perception of the greatness of Plato from this side. What renders the beauty of his style so important and significant consists principally in this, that it appears to be the living realization of a grand philosophical idea and requirement. We have already (p. 52. *n.* 75.) mentioned Plato's belief in the originality and mightiness of every soul's essence; we need therefore only remind of what was then said. Every spiritual power, in Plato's opinion, forms and builds for itself the body, and the form even, by which it is to belong to the visible world. The more sterling consequently the plastic power of the spiritual principle is, and the more unrestrictedly it can develope its forming activity, the more adapted will the bodily covering appear to the in-dwelling soul, the more perfect will the form present itself, the more powerful will the sight of it be to call forth the idea of the eternally beautiful in the mind of the beholder.[8]

The doubtful or contestable which exists in this Platonic thought, together with what is true and correct, troubles us little here, where we are not to examine its philosophical value. Certain it is, this is a thought as great and sublime, as fruitful

[8] Phaedr. 251. a. sq. [i. p. 327]. Cf. Rep. 3, 402. d. [ii. p. 84–5].

for art and life; and in its light the formal beauty of Plato's works must appear especially worthy of reverence, because it now no longer presents itself as the result of chance or whim, but as the product of a moral necessity. And but seldom in life or in literature do we find a harmonious relation between matter, or form, and spirit. Yet in the union of the ideal and real, of the sensual and intellectual, of the thought and the form, is revealed the highest skill and force of intellect.

As now that which we must especially admire and honour in the beautiful style of Plato is, that it is not the product of an excessive desire to please, but of a noble and wealthy mind, which serves high and solemn purposes, so his whole productiveness as an author is seen to be of an entirely superior and rare sort, in that he never yields to the influence and pressure of the moment, but stands always in the service of philosophy and its aims; he seizes on and elaborates, not that for which he has just now a desire or humour, but only that which the idea of philosophy, ever hovering before his mind, demands. This is, in fact, a virtue which we seldom meet with in authors of genius, and most rarely in authors of the present day. How many authors would have accomplished more, and that of better quality, if they had held their productive powers more under control, and had lavished them less freely in the unappeasable lust for creating. But our geniuses are often like weak women, who cannot withstand a stormy or languishing wooing, they yield with full ardour to every productive paroxysm, are inflamed in a moment towards every happy idea, every bright creation of the mind: and they make no secret of all this, but they willingly bear it everywhere in view, because they think such a resolute prodigality of mental capital is the surest sign and the dearest right of true genius.

Now, it may indeed be borne with and excused in those who are full of intellectual strength and ardour, if they set their snorting charger in full gallop as unhesitatingly on every ordinary pleasure excursion, as when the point is, to gain the

farthest goal. But it is very sad and almost intolerable to see such an abuse of powers, where it is not the natural exuberance of inward fulness, but an artificial product of such minds as wish to appear greater geniuses than they are. And alas! this is to be seen frequently enough in our modern art and literature. We have few gifted with great talents, but many with great affectation, who are certainly successful, when they have used the proper stimulants, in representing in tones and words the most original and clever convulsions.

Only he who has recognized and painfully felt this unhappy passion of always demeaning one's-self cleverly, and unconsciously wasting one's single talent, is in a condition to estimate the high value of the ancient classics generally, and particularly to admire the beautiful freedom of Plato's chaste mind from all such feverish licence.

The feeling of respect which this side of Plato's authorship awakes in us, is heightened greatly by the secure and graceful mastery with which he always knows how to rein in the ardour of his enthusiasm. The means which he uses for this purpose, and in which he has shown an unequalled mastery, is Irony. The æsthetic and philosophical importance of irony has, it is well known, been variously discussed by the Schlegelian school, and though errors and exaggerations, as well as derision and contradictions have not been wanting in the discussion, yet it has not remained without fruit in the determination of what is important and true in this matter.

In the philosophy of Plato, irony not only occupies a highly important position, but it forms also an essential trait in the sketch of his literary and intellectual greatness. It is with him the damper, applied at the right moment, when the chords of the soul are vibrating fullest and strongest; it operates on thoughts and their expression as an astringent and reducent,—in cases when the ardour of enthusiasm or fancy might perhaps be able to effect their sublimation. But it may also be regarded, as Ast strikingly remarks, as 'the purifying fire which resolves

again the sensuous form, in order to release the free spirit: as Plato would have said: I set before you a sensuous image of that which cannot be described or portrayed in words, in order only to intimate its nature to you; but that you may not become idolaters, and take the form for the essence, the image for the thing, I destroy again my own representation that your mind may not cleave to it, but rise above it to the idea,' etc.

But with Plato it is still more than this;[9] it is the sister of true heavenly wisdom who rejoices on the earth, and her delights are with the sons of men (Prov. viii. 31). It is the reflected splendour of that eternal glory, in which all disorders and obscurities are solved, in whose freedom all fear and suspense is removed, in whose happiness all contrasting discords are brought into harmonious concert. It is the manifest proof of the entire freedom of Plato's mind from habits of self-torment and depression, and of his free position above the contending antitheses within and without him; it flows from the secure consciousness of a precious possession, which can neither be troubled nor be robbed from him by the necessities and miserable condition of the throng of the world, and which, besides, as the poet says, permits him to behold cheerfully the drama of life; it arises from a certain conviction, that the bad, and that which is at variance with God, is already judged and put to naught, and that besides, it would be as foolish as superfluous to grieve to death over its ephemeral splendour and insolence (Ps. xxxvii. 1

[9] A threefold distinction is apparent, as *Ast* points out, in the irony of Plato. It is seen (1) as ordinary Socratic irony, jovial, parodying, in the tone of conversation, etc., as *e.g.*, in Protag. 342. a. sq. [i. p. 272]; (2.) as poetico-religious soaring up in bold flight with serene grace into the mystic and enthusiastic, as in Phaedr. 246. a. sq. 257. a. [i. pp. 322, 333]; (3.) as philosophically keen, annihilating all that is unphilosophical with that secure facility which only attained mastery can give, *e.g.*, Theaet. 179 e. [i. p. 415]. Soph. 252. a. [iii. p. 158]. It cannot, however, be denied, that too great bitterness in Plato is sometimes prejudicial to the high value and spirit of his irony.

sq. Jno. iii. 18); enough! it is rooted in the mental freedom and joy which has or anticipates the Atonement.

Quite otherwise now appears, when viewed from this strength and inward certainty of Plato's mind, the at first unpleasant peculiarity of so many dialogues, that they do not conduct the examination to a close, but break off when their object is almost attained. It is seen that neither deficiency of power in solution, nor capricious humours, determine Plato to leave the reader suddenly in the lurch. One perceives, on the contrary, that this manner, certainly irksome to one's ease, is intentional and necessary: he becomes reconciled to it, because he feels how much he owes to it, how much he has gained by it in mental power. Plato wishes to educate his pupils and readers to the mental vigour and independence which he has himself attained, and he uses, as an important means to this end, the plan of leaving problems unsolved. By not himself expressing the solution, he wishes to give the highest flight to the independence of the mind, already powerfully excited by the form of dialogue. The thought is developed, the right direction is given to subsequent meditation, the reader himself is to find or to form the conclusion, and to take unaided the last steps to the goal, which cannot now be easily missed. And other mode of coming into possession of the truth there is none. For truth does not allow itself to be given up and communicated ready-made as such; it does not allow itself, when it is expressed here or there, to be pocketed and carried off with all convenience, and without inward effort, every one must himself perceive it, comprehend it, and feel it to be his own.

That Plato has to do with only *one*, but this the *whole* truth, and that he does not give chase to so-called *truths*, and as soon as he has slain one, straightway present it in an elegant dish before the public as an *entrèe*, provided with an appetizing sauce,—this fact goes, like a silent power, through all his works, and gives them a special value, in connecting together organically all the single parts, separated from each

other as to time and contents, into one great and finished whole.

Let us, in order to be sensible of the variety and excellence of works produced in this manner, look for a moment at the history of the rise of most works of our ordinary authors. They write usually on all that comes across their path, or runs in their thoughts; the first best subject is the right one for them, if only it is adapted to show their talents and knowledge in an advantageous light; whether their single writings stand in an inner relation to each other, whether the birth of their works be grounded in an inner necessity for the development of their thoughts and knowledge, these things trouble the many but little. They turn, as the impulse comes, now to this, now to that material; from the fulness of their magazines they build now here, now there a stately wall; but when they have builded much and long, nothing in the end is finished but a broad and long wall-work in different directions, no entire and completed edifice.

It is quite otherwise with Plato's works; they all fit into each other nicely, and appear to have been produced with such a previous reference to each other, and on such a plan, that at last they form a temple in that noble style, in which all the light is received from above through the dome.

The Phaedrus, Gorgias, and Protagoras make their appearance, like steady workmen, provided with the necessary apparatus, to demolish the apparitions of the Sophists, to clear the ground and dig the foundations: the Phaedrus allows us, at the same time, to cast a glance, though but a fleeting one, at the beautiful draught of the whole: in the Theaetetus, Parmenides and Sophist, rise the firm buttresses and arches; the Cratylus provides for the acoustic relations; by the Philebus and Banquet the inner spaces are properly divided and ornamented; the Phaedo arranges the sacrificial services; the Republic collects the community into the sanctuary; in the Timaeus and Critias the whole rises finished and concluded

heavenwards,—and not till then does the beholder perceive the true meaning and idea of the whole, and see that it is, and is intended to be, nothing but a copy in miniature of the great edifice of the universe. The parts of these works were contrived, like the members of the world, on *one* design: here also as there, *one* striving after sacred ends runs through all the stages of development. The organic relation of the Platonic works,—this it is which is inestimably great and pleasing in them. But he who would truly feel this delight must first experience the joy with which our great Goethe regarded the works of nature, and concerning which, he has so well expressed himself, *e.g.*, in his letter from Italy to the Duchess Anna Amalia. But, in truth, nature with all the glory of her organic operations and creation, is, for many of our critics and book-makers, an apocalyptic number, which fact also they do not at all conceal; and it is sufficiently ludicrous that many of them think they have ranked themselves, as intellectual prodigies, high above Goethe, by not being able, in their writings, to be sufficiently amazed that Goethe so gladly and diligently collected mussel-shells and studied plants. To a large part of mankind the manufactured and dead is always dearer than that which is organically formed and vitalized, both in nature and the productions of the intellect, because their condition is that of elegant passivity, and any mode of apprehension is calmly gratifying to them.

There are two chief points in the conception of the organic—constant development from within and living relation of all the parts to each other and to the whole. We find both of these in Plato's style and works.[10] The organic character of his style has been sufficiently intimated in the preceding; the

[10] The Bible is pre-eminently an organic work, like Nature. We have still few attempts in theological literature thus to conceive and represent it. *Swedenborg's*, however unsuccessful, have still, from their tendency something noble and venerable in them. His chief work, Apocalypsis revelata, is especially worthy of mention in this connection.

organic structure of his thoughts and his system we shall have occasion to take note of hereafter; here it is principally the organic origin and connection of his writings, which may be rendered evident to us from what has been said above.

It cannot indeed be concealed that many doubts have been opposed to this view. Are not other writings of Plato extant besides those mentioned, which could be proved by a forced interpretation only, to have been comprehended in the original plan of the whole? And how can it be generally supposed that an author has surveyed and marked out beforehand the whole field of his future activity, and what seems still more impossible, has calculated beforehand the whole life-process of his mind and ideas, and has always been productive only in accordance with this calculation? Had such a scheme of literary activity laid at the foundation of all that which Plato found it necessary to work out, this systematic arrangement of his single writings must have been much more evident than it now is. But such a close connection between these writings is so little apparent, that many readers of Plato have much rather felt inclined to deny it altogether. Even some who are thoroughly acquainted with his works, are of opinion that they are not connected by any inward unity.

The weight of such authorities might be removed or balanced by other authorities. But our knowledge would gain little by such a course. We will suspend our decision on this point for the present, and wait till we have obtained a clear view of the spirit, character and contents of the Platonic philosophy. Then it will be seen whether the Platonic writings are to be considered as scattered leaves or as a concluded cycle.

Certain it is, we must not in the least think of pedantic calculation or anxiety, when we regard Plato's writings as pieces of work which were adapted to each other. For, that in the end they succeed and fit into each other, as if they were made for one another, has its ground far more in his creative genius than in the paltry measurings of cool deliberation. All

genuine productions of genius bear the profound unity of the author within them, and hence may be easily presented together as an organic whole. And, it is further certain, that on him who has no very clear idea of Plato's comprehensive intellectual greatness, the thought is involuntarily impressed, on a survey of Plato's literary performances; that his will has entered purely and fully into his doings; that he has written nothing, which would have remained unwritten without injury to the whole; and that he has written all, which the spirit and purpose of the whole demanded.[11]

And it is just this exceedingly rare peculiarity of his works which is the principal reason why most readers of Plato do not share immediately in the admiration which has been given to him both in ancient and modern times. One can hardly arrive at an understanding on the single dialogues, and to a hearty satisfaction in them, so long as he reads them singly and successively; on the contrary, he has more frequently the feeling that he does not rightly know what he is to make of them; whence, we observe among the Scholiasts and commentators of all times, innumerable and unsettled disputes concerning the proper object and fundamental thought of every dialogue. The understanding of the whole will alone render possible the understanding of the several parts, only when one has apprehended the point where all the threads, proceeding from the most diverse tendencies of mind, meet, can he, going back from this, explain these tendencies and set himself right with regard to them. It is with Plato's works as with every great symphony; one does not feel its value and beauty till he perceives it as a symphony in its entire fulness of life; single sections

[11] I am well aware that Plato left much incomplete, and did not even begin much that he wished to write, *e.g.*, the Philosophies and the Hermocrates. But a geographer must tell his scholars that the earth is a sphere, even though he knows there are Cordilleras and Himalayas on it, and so he who presents the Platonic greatness, must display it as organic, even though he is acquainted with some deficiencies in it.

presented by single instruments, not only remain usually not understood, but frequently make also a disagreeable impression, because one does not see and feel the significance which they have in and for the whole. Is it otherwise with the greatest of all symphonies, the history of the world? The eye of Him, who surveys the universe of things, rests with satisfaction on that moving picture, of which the out-cropping details confuse and wound us short-sighted mortals.

While, however, we in this manner endeavour to perceive the beauty, harmony, and greatness of the works of Plato, we must necessarily refer to the inner place of their origin, and disclose a pleasing sight of the beauty and greatness of that mind which produced them.

What a mind must that have been which produced and formed from itself this world of thought? What a clearness and strength of consciousness must he have possessed, to have surveyed this fulness of images and ideas which makes his writings so inexhaustible? What a symmetrical and vigorous cultivation must he have bestowed on all his mental capacities, in order to render them capable of such effective co-operation, as is seen in his works! What a truly ethical relation must he have established and maintained between the different functions of his mind, seeing that they all, ever looking up to the highest and ruling knowledge, strive with joy to be conducive and serviceable thereto, and seeing that they desire not to be or attain anything for themselves, independently of this, and never conceive themselves bound or injured when they obey only the law and judgment of the mind.

That condition of the soul which Plato describes[12] as the most healthy and most rational, is indeed nothing else but the reflection of his own. In himself exists that union of various powers through wisdom and love, after which he bids his friends to strive! in him is that harmonious condition firmly established,

[12] Rep. 4, 442. [ii. p. 127], and especially in the whole of the sixth book.

in which every organ of the mental life exercises its appropriate activity at the right time and in the right measure! And he who has delighted in this admirable equilibrium, in which the most diverse interests and most opposite powers stand with respect to one another, will scarcely be able to conceive how that reproach, which we refuted above, could have arisen, that Plato allowed his fancy to rule unchecked in the domain of reason. And though we have already sought to refute and destroy that accusation, yet we must not omit to mention here, that on the contrary, Plato's intellectual greatness rests peculiarly on the beautiful and just relation of his fancy to his understanding; and for this purpose we need merely, since the strength of his fancy does not admit of a doubt, to render evident his no less great strength in the peculiar activity of the understanding.

But how can we render this more evident than by a comparative glance from us to him in respect of severe and uninterrupted trains of thought? How many are there among us who could boast of such? We can scarcely concede to our age a mastery in that which is properly called *thinking*. Or it might even be maintained that to *think*, now means nothing further than to have thoughts and to connect them with each other! Where then in our day are the frequent thinkers, who, in purely inward activity of the understanding, can bring about and accomplish in themselves an act of thinking in uninterrupted and severe sequence? Writers and readers, thought-hunters and recorders, we have in plenty, but few thinkers in the above indicated sense of the word. Our power of thought has been too much enfeebled and spoiled by the now indispensable crutches of writing and reading for it purely of itself to remain long active. Our thinking is frequently like an intermittent pulse, it collects itself and buries itself momentarily in the subject, then it relaxes again, and the consciousness comes off from it.[13]

[13] We do not, of course, speak here of the heroes of our literature and philosophy.

We compel it indeed to return immediately with its whole clearness, but it does not always obey us, and we must often wait patiently, until it is pleased again to apply itself, and it is continually obliged to seek to restore again its quickly relaxing elasticity. We think, as we usually sing and read, in a desultory and fragmentary manner.

In continuous thinking, progressing without pause or digression, the ancients, taken as a whole, were stronger than we are; their orations and orators prove this; the weakly constitution of our modern oratory,—which we seek in vain to cloak with beautiful drapery—arises principally from our faint-heartedness in constant and severe thinking.

That Plato possessed and displayed precisely in this an extraordinary strength, no one will longer doubt who has tried to follow closely and fixedly the dialectic movement of his thoughts. He will not indeed say, how often he has stopped on his way to rest, because otherwise he would have lost his breath and reason, while the old man from Greece went vigorously forward in even rhythm on his steep path; but he will then confess, that it is rather a fatiguing pleasure to follow this thinker, and that generally he would hardly dare to try gymnastic exercises of the understanding with him. The Parmenides alone is perfectly adequate to furnish a valid proof of the severity and sureness of the Platonic movement of thought, and to show irrefragably that Plato's strength of understanding is equal to the living power of his fancy. Here is no trace of the play and flashing of the fancy, of the mingling of its poetic nature with the dry course of investigation; the examination is continued and ended in the sober abstractness and precision in which it begins. This dialogue is a master-piece of abstract dialectic procedure, and such unquestionably it was intended to be; Plato wished by it to legitimize himself, so to speak, as one who thoroughly understood thinking. And precisely herein is he truly superior to the great Aristotle, for Aristotle is more of a critic than a thinker. He read and studied far too much for him to perse-

vere long or to continue uninterruptedly in his own thoughts, his thinking falls for the most part into judgments, or passes over into argument; the greatest part of his writings consists of exceedingly clever and striking remarks. He thinks *of* all, *over* all, and *through* all, and utters nothing which he has not well considered. But his thinking is kept in progress more by the succession of objects on which it is engaged, and to which it is continually attached, than progressively developed from its own inner ductility. The power of adhering to and carrying through a train of thought has been more clearly manifested by the understanding of Plato in his works, than by the understanding of Aristotle.

That, in general, reason and imagination are not in such absolute opposition as to exclude each other, but on the contrary presuppose and conditionate each other in every truly great mind, our good German friends might have learned long ago from the greatest of their poets, if they could have descended from sheer criticism to seeing and hearing. What an understanding had Goethe, and yet what an imagination!

The feeling of reverence which we on this account pay to the great poet—verily, we owe it also to the intellectual greatness of the ancient sage! And, in the end, we shall not find it difficult to explain or to pardon the boldness of the ancients in calling Plato divine and a god, even though we never allow our own enthusiasm for him to go quite so far.[14]

[14] Deus noster Plato. Cic. Orat. 3. ad Quint. fr. 1, 10. ad Att. 4, 16. N. D. 2, 32, etc. He is called 'the divine' even among the Turks. *Fabric.* Bibl. Gr. ed. Harl. 3, p. 157.

CHAPTER III.

PRINCIPAL FORMS OF ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY, AND ITS POSITION WITH RESPECT TO LIFE.

If the knowledge which we have begun to acquire of the Christian element in Plato is to be complete, we must direct our attention principally to the spirit and essential contents of his philosophy. This, however, cannot be done immediately or without further preparation. For Plato's philosophy is not merely his work, but also the work of his age. As, therefore, we have sought in the two preceding chapters, to enable ourselves to comprehend its form and its origin in the peculiarity of Plato's mind, the present chapter must lead us to a point of view from which we shall see it grow out of the history of Greek philosophy and from the soil of Greek life. And while our examination proceeds on this road to its main object, the principal idea of the whole investigation, as we have also intimated in the preceding chapter, is progressively developed by its side, some one of its relations unfolding at every stage.

To philosophize is to reflect.[1] That is, *subjectively*, for

[1] Concerning the origin of the expressions, Philosopher and Philosophy, and the various definitions of these words among the ancients, see *Brucker* Hist. Phil. 1, p. 1009, etc. Cf. Plat. Rep. 5, 475, c. sq. 6, 484. b. [ii. pp. 162, 171]. The confusion of the mind by impressions, and the manner in which it works out of this to recollection is beautifully described, Phaedr. 249, 250 [i. p. 325–6]. From this it is also clear why Plato makes philosophizing begin with *θαυμάζειν*. Theact. 155. d. [i. p. 385]. Plato himself gives the best commentary on this. Rep. 7, 518. a. [ii. p. 206]. Aristotle also makes philosophizing begin with admiration and end with admiring nothing. Met. 1, 2. (nil admirari! Hor. Ep. 1, 6, 1. Pythagorean.)

one not to allow himself to be overpowered or overwhelmed by the universe of things and conceptions, but to feel himself a match for it, to hold himself firmly opposite and clearly above it: and *objectively*, to have nothing in himself unfelt or not understood, but to render all correspondent to the clear unity of his innermost life; things are to reveal *their* sense to *our* sense, this we desire, when we philosophize concerning them; crudities are no more for our head than our stomach.

Hence, it follows, that philosophizing is a function as natural and organically necessary as breathing and digestion, and that every people, as every individual, begin to philosophize so soon as they learn to understand themselves as men and to grasp themselves in consciousness. But when philosophizing begins to be active everywhere where the human consciousness is roused, it by no means follows from this, that it also everywhere obtains an independent form. Animal life has its essential ground and character in nerve-life. But with how few intimations of nerve-life is nature content in the lower orders of animals, before she obtains in the higher species those conditions, which render possible its pure and full expression.

Asia, the cradle of the human race, was also the cradle of philosophy. In the written monuments of ancient Asia, few of which indeed have come down to us, and in the most ancient traditions of those regions, we find venerable testimonies of the movements and efforts of the philosophical spirit among the ancient Asiatic nations.

But philosophy did not attain an independent development in Asia. On the one hand, principally from historical grounds, philosophy remained blended with religion; on the other hand, especially from physical causes, the Asiatic mind did not arrive at proper self-reflection, but kept itself essentially in the sphere of meditation.

Only on the higher plants does the light operate so energetically, that the leaves of the calix and corolla, which are blended into one in the lower orders, separate, and the calix retires from

the corolla, to surround with friendly protection the flower which it has aided to an independent existence.

So was it with philosophy in Greece. There all the favourable conditions for its independent existence were at hand, in the political constitution of the state, as in the mental constitution of the individuals. Under its serene sky, the cheerful mind felt itself freer than elsewhere from the bonds of sensuous nature with its necessities and sufferings; for these sufferings were fewer than elsewhere, and those necessities easily satisfied in the richly endowed nature of the country. The innate mobility of soul, especially at Athens, was increased in an important degree, by the early established republican constitution. Almost all ranks and classes of civil society were brought into constant and many-sided intercourse with each other; almost every individual felt himself in living intercommunication with the whole. How many sides of consciousness, in dull stupor elsewhere, must have been brought out clearly here by manifold friction with men and events! How extraordinarily must the constant conflict of private interests with those of public life, have roused and strengthened the reflecting, observing, calculating power of the mind! Enough! Grecian history is, at the same time, the history of the emancipation of philosophy.

Every plant which grows up above the soil to the light, raises up with it more or less the seed-lobes from which it sprang. Thus also was it with philosophy in Greece. It could not and would not deny its origin from religious elements. Hence, the philosophemes of the Ionian school frequently sound like ancient oracles; hence, Parmenedes, Empedocles, and others, deliver their philosophical theories, like the Orphics, in songs and visions, and even to the latest times, down to the Physics of the purely intellectual Aristotle, traces remained visible in the philosophical contemplation of nature among the Greeks, of the living connection in which it had formerly stood with the religious contemplation of the universe.

All heathen religions are the daughters of the feeling for nature, and bear within them the germs, from which are subsequently developed philosophically, materialistic and dualistic systems of Pantheism. For, not so much nature as such is the object of feeling among the heathen, as rather the life in nature,[2] because this general life is the source of one's own and special life. The sensuous, tangible, *material*, appears first as the essential condition and stock of life; the universal diffusion and unceasingness of life are represented as indestructible omnipotence, and from the perception of what is advantageous and disadvantageous to life comes forth the antithesis of good and evil (Osiris and Typhon).

Here then, we have an outline of the most ancient philosophy in Greece. It has been said often enough, that this is natural philosophy, and it has been proved in what sense it is so. It must be so, because, as we have seen, it was a shoot from religion. But it would have been so necessarily, even if it had grown up independently of this. The inner, logical, ground of this lies in the consciousness. For, consciousness is never consciousness absolutely, but consciousness of something. But this first something of consciousness, can be nothing else but the world perceived by the senses. For all consciousness is roused by impressions, and developes itself in contest with these. When the consciousness has mastered the impression, the striving after expression arises. Now, when the philosophical consciousness has attained this capability of expression, what will it seek to express first, but that which has affected it first and most powerfully? viz., the great, ever present web of life, by which it feels itself contained and conditioned?

All these various efforts of the ancient Greek philosophy to reflect on nature and the world, we can, or rather must, designate by a single name, since all together they constitute the first

[2] The physical root of the conceptions *good* and *bad*, their reference to life, to that which is promotive of or injurious to its development, appears plainly enough in Plato. Rep. 10, 609. d. [ii. p. 279].

main development and principal form of Greek philosophizing. And since the philosophical contemplation of nature proceeded from, and was especially cultivated by that school, we will call the one or first chief form of Greek philosophy, conceding that this designation is more or less local and temporary, Ionicism. How comprehensive this title is, will escape no one who is at all acquainted with the history of philosophy: Thales, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Leucippus, and Democritus, are the most important individuals in this province, and collectively belong to one great whole, however divergent and various their systems may appear. To adduce their views and teachings here, would be an unsuitable digression to matters which lie without our range of view, it must only be briefly remarked, that the Pantheism of Thales, Anaxagoras, and Heraclitus, expressed itself particularly as dynamic and dualistic, that of Leucippus and Democritus as materialistic and mechanical. It is, moreover, both interesting and instructive, to observe, in the above named as generally in the old Greek philosophers, the encroaching on each other of the most various intellectual tendencies, and to perceive the points or movements of thought which bring about an approximation to each other of essentially different doctrines. For, in the philosophical schools and their heads, there is naturally as little separation into classes as in the case of the four temperaments.

All real intellectual freedom takes a concrete form from necessity or from a passive state. This is the key to the history of philosophy. Philosophy is developed and rises in accordance with this law. In its first form it was unable to free itself from determination by that without, or from the inward being overflown by the outward. But just by this was formed the second chief nucleus of its growth. That is, Eleaticism is the wider sense of the word. Eleaticism, taken strictly as to its essence, is the pure antithesis of Ionicism, or the transition from worldliness to wilfulness. While in Ionicism, in the effort of self-reflection, the self appears only, as it were,

apostrophized; in Eleaticism it appears most expressly accented.[3] Eleaticism then, was the struggle of the philosophical consciousness, successful after its sort, to free itself from the Alpine pressure of objective multiplicity, to far outweigh the mass of impression and variety, by unity in the form of thought. It was compelled, therefore, by its contraposition, to be as one-sided as Ionicism had been. It is also easily perceived why the understanding of Ionicism and Eleaticism, in so far as they are antitheses, was from the first connected with the conceptions of *moving* and *motionless*.[4] Ionicism saw before it in its contemplation the everlasting stream of life and change; the Eleatics found in the essence of human thought the unit, ever alike, and eternally unchanged. In the former, therefore, as *Ast* expresses it, the unessential life; in the latter, the lifeless essence, formed the chief contents of philosophy.

Among the Eleatics, Parmenides is the most important and the most adequate representative of its whole tendency. As Ionicism obtained its greatest philosophical breadth in materialism or atomism; so the idealistic speculation of Eleaticism rose to its highest point in Parmenides.[5]

But on both sides of it we see two other forms of development of Greek philosophy, which are nearer and more closely related to Eleaticism in general, than to Ionicism, and hence must be taken and apprehended at the same time with it. They are Pythagorism and Sophisticism. What principally causes Pythagorism to appear co-ordinate with Eleaticism is the doctrine, which is carried out in the severest abstracted-

[3] Cf. on the opposition of Ionicism and Eleaticism. Soph. 242. d, e. [iii. p. 142].

[4] Theaet. 181. a. 183. e. Cf. 152. e. [i. pp. 416, 420, 382]. Crat. 440. c. [iii. p. 391]. See also *Jacobi* Sämmtl. Wke. 2 pp. 68, 70.

[5] Plato had a great reverence for Parmenides; he calls him Father. Soph. 237. a. 241. d. [iii. pp. 135, 142]. Especially important to Platonism is the doctrine of Parmenides, that the reason alone is capacitated for true knowledge.

ness, that numbers are the proper and eternal entities of the universe,[6] while the mystico-poetic side of its cosmology inclines more to Ionicism, and the presentation of its ethical points allies it to the Socratic school. Sophisticism attaches itself to Eleaticism, by its often falsely applied but well cultivated dialectics![7]

Philosophy had made in Eleaticism no insignificant progress towards its inner liberation. But the freedom to which it had raised itself in Eleaticism was not the living freedom of the idea, but the dead liberty of the conception. It was the freedom which cannot maintain itself, as such, otherwise than by a decided negation of all else without its centre. By this constant readiness to defend itself or to contend with all opposed to it, it proves, however, that it is not so much freedom as desirous of becoming such, and that in its inmost essence it still belongs to the category of unfree things, because it fears their might, and therefore ascribes to them a power and importance equal to its own. True liberty knows that the opposite cannot harm it, can neither overthrow nor change its innermost being, and therefore fears it no longer.

These two chief forms of development of Greek philosophy, as they appear in Ionicism and Eleaticism, were followed by Platonism, as the third and most important, completing and concluding the first study of philosophy. In this position and relation only is the true and full significance of Platonism clearly recognized. It appears here as the genial flight of the

[6] The Pythagorean doctrine of numbers is especially important to the Platonic philosophy. The ideas of Plato have often been regarded as identical with the numbers of the Pythagoreans.

[7] On the Sophists, see above, p. 64. It must be rendered especially prominent in relation to Plato and the Sophists, that the latter treated thought and knowledge in a highly licentious manner, applying it as they pleased to all sorts of purposes, and that Plato felt himself bound to raise science again from a *hetæra* to the rank of a goddess, and to inculcate on men a profound (Christian) feeling of respect for its dignity and excellence.

philosophical spirit to its highest goal, the removing of antitheses, the reconciliation of the quarrel between nature and mind, between world- and self-consciousness. How, and by what means, Platonism attempted and effected the reconciliation will be perceived on the consideration of its principles.

The Platonic philosophy, in spite of its high perfection, by no means rendered the further development of philosophy dispensable, but rather necessary. For it is related to the later philosophy as discovery to invention; or, as the idea to the genuine scientific conception. The task of philosophy after Plato was to approach for the second time the goal to which Plato had raised himself, in a way in which every true progress must be connected with a true enriching, strengthening, and extending of the thinking powers.

So is it in the life of nature. Nature often closes a series of developments already in the third or fourth evolution with something exceedingly perfect, without however having contented her plastic impulse, and without proceeding from the high stage already attained to the next higher. But usually she begins again as it were from the beginning with her next developments, and seeks to build up again from the depths to the previous elevation as if she had forgotten or unlearned her former successful attempts. She ends and crowns the life of grasses with the palm; and afterwards forms cabbage and weeds.

Socraticism cannot be adduced as a principal form or stage in the history of Greek philosophy; it is to be considered rather as a subordinate member and the preliminary stage of Platonism, a most important influence on which has from the first been correctly ascribed to it. But the true character of this influence has not always been hit upon, nor its most important element brought out with sufficient definiteness. It would be entirely erroneous to consider Socraticism as purely the infancy of Platonism, or Platonism as only the many-sided and scientific development of Socratic ideas. The history of philosophy has

already frequently laboured and lately with success,[8] to set in a clear light the essential difference between the Platonic and the Socratic philosophy, which really existed, notwithstanding all the influence of the latter on the former.

The beneficial influence of Socrates on Plato proceeded principally from two points: we may designate the one theoretic, the other practical.

In the *atomic* sense of the word Plato as a pupil of Socrates learned infinitely little from his instructor; in the *dynamic* sense, on the contrary, infinitely much. The gain which Plato drew from his travels and his study of the older philosophy was eminently *extensive;* the gain which his intercourse with Socrates brought him was more *intensive.* The former enlarged and enriched his mind, exercised his power of combination and raised him to that mental elevation, which ensured him a broad survey. But the latter strengthened and deepened his consciousness, and assisted in the development and cultivation of his distinguished talents for the most inward mental activity, which moved constantly and carefully from within outwards towards an appointed goal. The ability of thinking, in the true sense of the word,[9] Plato owed especially to Socrates. For in this consists the chief service of Socrates to philosophy, that he perceived and corrected the fundamental error in the philosophizing of his time. This fault was the hurrying to conclusions from premises which had not been thoroughly examined and established. Hence Socrates sought to lead all efforts of

[8] It is both interesting and instructive to observe the different and opposite tendencies, which have proceeded from the single school of Socrates. Most of the pupils of Socrates did not apprehend nor cultivate the *entire* philosophy of the master, but only some one side of it. Plato was the only one who adopted the whole, and raised it to a higher stage. He repeatedly attacked the one-sided Socratics, especially Antisthenes, who was an enemy to all speculation. Theaet. 197. c. sq. 158. c., etc. [i. pp. 428, 388].

[9] Socrates could stand for hours meditating and absorbed in thought. Conv. 220. c. [iii. p. 571]. A. Gell. Noct. Att. 2, 1.

thought to the right starting-point and to the clear consciousness of their correctness.[10]

If we would weigh the influence of Socraticism on Platonism in its entire significance, we must first consider an important point of distinction between the ancient and our modern philosophy, which will be seen most distinctly when we perceive the position of ancient philosophy with respect to life. It is, moreover, of great importance generally to an understanding of the Platonic philosophy, to be aware of the essential points by which the ancient is distinguished from modern philosophy.

On the first view there appears to be no important difference between the two. Indeed, so many resemblances present themselves, that one is rather inclined to regard our modern philosophy as a younger sister of the ancient. We find in the latter almost the same principal ideas and definitions as in the former, nearly the same speculative tendencies, pretty much the same problems, investigations and proofs; similar systems rise on similar bases; almost the same sects, schools, and parties contend here as there, with the same weapons and with the same heat and bitterness. For every phenomenon in the territory of modern philosophy, the ancient can afford one similar and related, so that here also the proverb of the ancient preacher receives a new confirmation: 'There is nothing new under the sun' (Eccles. i. 9). Is even the criticism of Kant so new, and never before applied, as it has been sometimes maintained? Could we not speak of a Kantianism before Kant, in the old Greek philosophy, just as a Spinozism before Spinoza has been spoken of?

But the feeling of resemblance between the ancient and modern philosophy, which arises on such considerations, is

[10] Cf. Arist. Met. 13, 4. Hence Plato insisted always on the greatest circumspection with respect to the starting-point in philosophizing. Crat. 436. d. [iii. p. 387]. Cf. Polit. 278. c. etc. [iii. p. 225]. Hence also the great weight which he lays on definitions. Phaedr. 237. c. [i. p. 312]. But definitions of *things*, not *word*-definitions.

almost certainly overpowered by the feeling of essential difference, which obtains on a closer investigation of the subject. This difference is already sufficiently evident with respect to *form*. Read immediately after the Nicomachian Ethics of Aristotle a compendium of ethics of the Kantian or Hegelian school,—what a decided contrast between the two, in form, language, arrangement, and development! And yet, Aristotle is the one among the ancient philosophers who stands nearest to the philosophers of the present day in his mode of treating philosophical subjects!

How much does the philosophy of the present day diverge from the ancients in the number and division of the philosophical sciences! for, with every organic development, the originally single whole divides ever more and more into independent particulars. The patriarchs were shepherds, hunters, warriors, priests and kings, all in one person, and the ancient priesthood comprised within it, besides the liturgical, rhetorical and prophetic offices, the practice also of astronomy and medicine. So ancient philosophy was originally an undivided whole, which did not separate into its main branches till after Plato. What occurred in the ancient philosophy as occasional reflection, has extended itself in that of the present day to a distinct sphere of learning. The ancient philosophy was a hall; the modern is a city, with many separate streets, squares and houses; the ancient philosophers perambulated the entire hall, the modern are for the most part properly at home only in a certain quarter of the city.

But the modern philosophy is essentially different from the ancient not in *form* only, but in *spirit* also. The ancient philosophy is related to the modern in this respect, somewhat as innocence and simplicity to dissension and consciousness. In the ancient philosophy, inquiry was a pure and simple activity of the mind; in the modern it is more or less contaminated and duplex throughout; contaminated by the many self-feelings of consciousness, which very often rouses its powers for no other

object than that during the excitement it may apprehend and feel itself; duplex, in so far as every act of knowing is at the same time a self-knowledge, every act of thinking proceeds so to speak, contemporaneously with itself, and sees and regards itself. The ancients in their philosophizing knew at bottom only one thing, what they *wished* to do, but not what they most *ought*, nor what they *could* and *could not* do, hovered plainly before their eyes.[11] For philosophy was then an Australia, unexplored in the interior, and not known exactly as to it boundaries. We have the advantage of a distinct survey of the main problems and errors of the ancients, without, however, having obtained by this alone a greater approximation to the truth; for, as it is not promotive of virtue to become acquainted with all sins and crimes in their true nature, just so little is our wisdom specially promoted by perceiving all the blue spots which it has acquired in contest with errors; it suffers for its intercourse with errors by the loss of a part of its power and freshness.

Religion also causes an essential difference between the ancient and modern philosophy. On the latter Christianity ever exerts a powerful influence; in the former, we see the influence of heathenism. Classic heathenism rested, as we perceived, on a healthy sensuousness and delight in the world. The whole antique life is hence throughout firmer, more concrete and realistic than ours; and so is also the antique philosophy. Our philosophy, since it has more to do with thought than with nature and human life, is far more attenuated and spiritualistic than the ancient. So complete a separation of all material from the thinking subject, so methodical an isolation of the individu-

[11] Even the philosophizing of Plato seems often to be only a groping or assaying. Thought seeks to move now in this, now in that direction, in order to see how far and whither it will come; it sets up now this, now that, and assaults it from all sides, in order to see whether it will stand firm and be tenable or not. We must not, however, overlook the fact, that all this in Plato is often more an *acting* uncertainly than a *being* uncertain.

ality, and so thorough an elevation of bloodless abstraction into pure metaphysical nihility, as has become possible and prevalent at the present day, the ancients knew little of, and accomplished but seldom, if it all. Abstract personality had not yet become with them as with us, a world in itself; a single person passed for but little among them; religiously considered, he melted from their sight into the infinite All; politically viewed, when opposed to the common weal, he sank almost into nothing. The disunion between idea and fact, between the schools and life had not yet accordingly grown so absolute as among us. And this circumstance is the principal foundation of a distinction between the ancient and modern philosophies, which is highly important in itself, as well as for the following examination.

The ancient philosophy stood in every respect *nearer to life* and applied itself thereto more diligently, than ours. In its derivation, in its inquiries and communications, in its whole nature and activity, the old philosophy appears as appertaining and related to practical life. In ours, its very idiom betrays that it was born and brought up apart from life; the book and the school, not life, are the element in which it moves. Our philosophy seeks for the (ideal) truth; the ancient for that which is (really) true, namely, for *things* that are true; our philosophy abstracts itself for the most part from the real, the ancient consists chiefly in a continual reflection thereon; our philosophy strives after an independent existence in system and science as the highest; the ancient desired most to exist, not for itself, but as correct thinking diffused through all minds. Among us the value of philosophizing is determined speculatively, among the ancients eminently practically, the former philosophy is most highly esteemed, the latter was most effective. The connection between philosophy and life was natural and immediate in antiquity, among us it is mediate and manufactured. The ancients philosophized with and among men, our philosophers philosophize usually only when they are not among men, but among books by themselves in their sanctums: those

were the formers of youth;[12] these are principally the tutors of future scholars. A scholar of the nineteenth century and a Hebrew prophet are certainly things widely different; and the Greek philosophers were not indeed quite the same as the Hebrew prophets, and for conceivable reasons could not be so; certain however it is, that the life-significance of the ancient Greek philosophy is perceived most clearly, when it is considered as a phenomenon analogous to the prophetic dispensation.

For ancient Greek philosophy desired to be in fact, with respect to life, not merely an Encyclopædia of knowledge, but also a source of power and salvation,[13] and the forming and ordering spirit for the whole of life and all its relations. As the Apostles required the Christians to carry their Christianity into all the concerns of life, learning even to eat and drink in the name of the Lord (1 Cor. x. 31), so ancient philosophy desired to bring about a not less universal connection between itself and life, and to aid in the regulation and management not merely of affairs of state, but even of the family and the forum.[14] Education was to be exclusively in its hands; even Art was to go to school to it, and it maintained that it alone, or at least it best, could produce morality and nobility of soul; like the Christian clergy, the ancient philosophers considered themselves as having the care of souls, and toiled zealously and not with-

[12] Ancient philosophy desired to be that in life which should rouse men from their dreams and put their souls in a truly awakened condition. Cf. above, p. 131, *n.* 1, and Rep. 5, 476. sq. 6, 484. b. [ii. pp. 163, 170]. The passage in Rep. 6, 494. a. [ii. p. 181], that only very few men are, or can be, philosophers, as little contains an absolute contradiction to the above remark, as Matt. xix. 30 to 1 Tim. ii. 4. Moreover the saying, 'Many are called,' etc., was proverbial also among the heathen. Phaed. 69. c. [i. p. 68].

[13] Cic. Tusc. 1, 26. The Biblical idea of *salvation* was not foreign to heathendom. Even Democritus designated philosophy an institution for the salvation of the soul. Clem. Al. Paed. 1. p. 60. d. Cic. Tusc. 3, 3. Cf. 4. 27. See on the comprehensive capacity of philosophy. Ib. 5, 2. Cf. Plat. Rep. 5, 475. c. [ii. p. 162]. Conv. 210. d. iii. p. 550].

[14] Prot. 318. e. [i. p. 247].

out success for the conversion and reformation of the vicious. The ancient philosophy strove also after religious importance and influence, and it was not incorrectly remarked, as we have seen, by Clement of Alexandria, that philosophy wished to serve, and really did serve, Greek life as a kind of precursor and substitute for Christianity.

The near position and inner relation of the ancient philosophy to practical life proceeds necessarily from the peculiar mode of living among the ancients. Life in antiquity had, for the most part, on account of the republican state-constitution, a publicity, an universality and mobility of interests of which we in our separatistic mode of thinking and living have scarcely any idea. To speak, act, see and hear, were, in antiquity, the life-acts of the people and the individuals; among us very little is spoken and done publicly; much more read and thought at home. In antiquity life moved on out of doors, among us it sits behind closed doors. There the market, the baths, gardens, gymnasiums, race-course, and sacred groves, were the places of meeting and exercise of men and thoughts. No gloomy lecture-room secluded the philosophers with their pupils from active life; the masters delivered lectures to their disciples as they walked under plane-trees or in porticos, the philosophical discourse was joined on to every day conversation; philosophizing was not pinched up between sections and paragraphs, as at the present day, when it cannot begin until the tutor has found the page of his compendium, at which he stopped, and immediately ceases when he closes the book and leaves the desk, but passing over quickly and easily from the tone of the school to that of conversation, it was to be found everywhere ready at hand.

The above remarks on ancient philosophy and its relation to life are most true, as every one knows, of the philosophy of Socrates. It was especially the endeavour and the merit of Socrates that he cultivated the natural tendency of philosophy to life, and rendered it *practical* wisdom; and this is what Cicero

means, when he says :[15] 'Socrates called down philosophy from heaven, and brought it into life.' Yet Socrates would not have adopted the thought of forming a matrimonial alliance between philosophy and life, with such decision, nor could he have effected its realization with so much success, if the thought had not been prevalent before, and its carrying out prepared for by various favourable circumstances.

Among the pupils of Socrates none apprehended the favourite thought of the noble master with more enthusiasm, maintained it with more power and love, and strove to conduct it further than the practically and intellectually energetic Plato. The influence of Socrates over him from this side is of the highest importance to an understanding and estimation of the Platonic philosophy. In other respects, and especially with respect to severe scientific character and versatility of reflection, Plato the philosopher was essentially different from Socrates the philosopher; but with respect to the blessed influence of philosophy on life he agreed perfectly with the latter. With the same energy, if not with the same success, he continued the work begun by his great master, and laboured to open and render accessible the sources of true wisdom to all the relations of life. He had especially at heart the politico-religious regeneration of his country by philosophy, and he would indeed have effected it, according to his spirit and striving, if it could be effected by an idea and by the recognition and reverence of the truth. That the world would and could not be better till philosophers were kings, or kings philosophers,[16] was an earnest and hearty conviction of his mind, which, though certainly not absolutely correct, has been often unjustly ridiculed. For this expression must be apprehended in the sense of Plato before it can be properly explained or allowed. Yes, if every one of those who

[15] Cic. Tusc. 5, 4. Cf. Ac. qu. 1. 4, 5. How *cœlum* is to be understood here is evident from Plat. Phaed. 96. a. 97. b. [i. p. 102–3].

[16] Rep. 5, 473. e. sq. 6, 485. a. [ii. pp. 160, 173, etc.]. Cf. Capit. Vit. Ant. 27, and Philo. Vit. Mos. 2. abin.

at this day call themselves philosophers, and stand as such in the titles of books, should request, with reference to this Platonic expression, the government of states and the world, and wish to conduct the same—then the prophetic word of the ancient sage might indeed require a considerably long time for its real fulfilment. But to such philosophers as Plato means, and as it would be difficult to find, on this sublunary sphere, the realization of that somewhat bold expectation might of course be more readily intrusted.

This sketch of the relation of philosophy to practical life in ancient times will not fail to be attacked and contradicted. Are we told, it will be said, that ancient philosophy was practical wisdom not scholastic science? that it spoke a language intelligible in common life, that it stood in an intimate relation to life, and powerfully influenced all its relations? As if we did not know how exactly the ancient philosophers were accustomed to fix the outward limits to their circle of instruction, and to communicate the whole of their science, without reserve, only within the school and to their select disciples! As if we did not know how the greatest philosophers held themselves apart from life, and did not consider the great public worthy of the communication of their views! As if we did not know in what strictly scientific language most of their works were composed, though very few of them have come down to us! As if we did not know how merry the comedians and satirists made themselves over the strange idiom of the philosophers, and how the unintelligibility of his expression brought on Heraclitus the soubriquet of The Obscure.[17] As if we we did not know that the practical importance which the ancient philosophy so eminently possessed and strove after can be ascribed not less correctly to the modern philosophy also! Has not our philosophy promised loudly and frequently enough that it will be all in all to practical life, and will lay its foundations as deeply

[17] Diog. La. 2, 22. Cic. N.D. 1, 26.

as it will highly elevate and bless and glorify it? Does it not then frequently enough come forth from the schools to preach to life and to ameliorate it? Does it not recommend urgently enough to life its precepts for all life's greater and lesser relations? Does it not labour with sufficient zeal and assiduity in the construction of the best state and the best world? And was not the public, in classic antiquity, fully as ungrateful and unreceptive for the gifts and offerings of philosophy as at the present day? Philosophy manifested in antiquity by no means so decided and thorough an approximation to life, as it has been maintained; but life advanced to meet philosophy in a still less friendly manner, and still less willingly received its directions. On the contrary, life met philosophy with contempt,[18] with contempt it rejected the offered services, and in the execution of Socrates it pronounced most unambiguously its view of, and disposition towards, philosophy. And ancient history furnishes not a few such examples of the violent distaste of practical men for philosophy. We need mention only the sentence of banishment against Protagoras, Diagoras, Anaxagoras, Hermodorus, and others. Was not Aristotle himself obliged to escape by flight from the danger which threatened his life.[19] Do we not read, for instance, how Callicles, in the Gorgias of Plato, expresses himself concerning philosophy?[20] For youths, he says, it is quite suitable to awaken and exercise their mental powers by philosophizing. But when he sees men, and even old men, busy themselves with philosophy, it is as contrary and disquieting to him as when he hears adults lisp and prattle like children.

[18] Rep. 6. 487. d. [ii. p. 174]. Plato himself seems to have admitted as correct the common prejudice against the usefulness of philosophers in daily life. Theaet. 174. a. [i. p. 409]. Yet it was, in fact, his serious opinion, that no one is more fit for the conduct of affairs than the philosopher.

[19] See on this point Diog. La. 2, 19; 5, 5; 9, 1. Ael. Var. hist. 3, 26. Plat. Per. c. 32. Cic. N. D. 1, 23.

[20] Gorg. 485. a. 487. b. [i. pp. 182, 185]. Rep. 6, 489. c. [ii. p. 176].

And unquestionably Plato here makes Callicles express the then prevalent public opinion.

But these and other particulars cannot afford a refutation of the views presented above. For, if much were to be gained by so doing, we might show each of these to be in part favourable and in part repugnant, to our view. If Heraclitus was reproached for his obscurity, this testifies that the abstruse method of presenting philosophical doctrines, was unusual, and had an air of strangeness. And, though most philosophical works of the ancients have, like ours, a scholarly form, yet, they were composed more in the tone and character of discussions, than in that of our text-books and compendiums: and, if Plato had intended his works for the school and not for the public, he would have written them in a systematic form, and not in one taken from every-day life. However separated and secluded from practical life, single schools may have been, the majority of them always counted on a general sympathy on the part of the educated public, and even women, to whom, in other respects, very little freedom was allowed in Grecian life, were frequently to be found in the circle of those who hung on the lips of their sage instructors. The closest friendship existed between Pericles and Anaxagoras; Philip chose Aristotle for the tutor of his son Alexander; and even the tyrant Dionysius, took pleasure in the instructions of Plato. And, if we see on the one hand, that the philosophers suffered shame and persecution from the general public, yet we behold no less on the other hand, splendid tokens of honour, by which the public testified their diligence in glorifying the worth and merits of celebrated philosophers.[21] The execution of Socrates, moreover, far from refuting the powerful influence of ancient philosophy

[21] Protagoras was revered as a god before his banishment. Theaet. 179. a. [i. p. 414]. Rep. 10, 600. c. [ii. p. 290]. Athens bestowed the freedom of the city on Pyrrho, and Elis granted exemption from taxes to all philosophers for his sake. It is well known what extraordinary reverence Zeno, Polemon, Crates, and others, enjoyed.

on practical life, is, on the contrary, when rightly estimated, one of its strongest proofs. For men will never express or behave themselves with violence, for or against anything, unless they detect its living influence in their midst. They would have risen and resisted neither the Gospel nor the Socratic philosophy, if they had not early felt, in the case of the former, as in that of the latter, its purpose and capacity to penetrate deeply into their organic life, in order to destroy the bad in them, and to reform and invigorate the good.

Yet, the weighing of such single speeches and counter-speeches does not contribute very much to the establishment of the truth. It has been already intimated above, how easy it is to abate somewhat from any assertion, or to distort it. It is even quite clear and conceivable, that no truth can be expressed in such a form as to render it absolutely impossible to contradict it from some point or side. Shall we then, in order to avoid contradiction, keep all our thoughts and expressions continually in suspense, and be very careful not to assert anything decidedly? If such a prudent caution were general, how could we gain or promote any fixed knowledge?

He who would aid his readers or hearers in obtaining a clear view or insight, cannot effect this otherwise than by drawing the chords, which are to give the clear tone, a little tightly, or giving them a somewhat sharp tuning. For, if he do not, the vibrations flow, without character, into one another, and produce no clearly felt impression on the consciousness. The atmosphere and the public will take care unbidden of the necessary lowering of the sharp tones.

With this view of the ancient Greek philosophy in its principal forms and in its position with respect to life, we are now sufficiently capacitated to turn our attention to the philosophy of Plato himself, and to apprehend those features and doctrines which are most important for our present purpose.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY.[1]

PLATO says,[2] 'Thinking is asking. The interrogatory impulse exists in every soul; though not always felt, nor satisfied in the proper manner. Those who feel it strongly, and strive after its true satisfaction carefully and unceasingly,—they are the truly

[1] Let it not be overlooked that these are 'Principles,' not an exhaustive and comprehensive presentation of the Platonic Ideas! Only those are to be presented which are most calculated to produce a lively impression of the peculiar bearing and spirit of Platonism, and from *that side* which is nearest to Christianity. The order and sequence of the thoughts was in part conditioned by this, and I hope I shall not be censured that in this I have deviated from the usual mode of representation in compartments. It could not and might not be my object to tell the reader, in this chapter, what Plato thought and taught on this and that subject; but my main endeavour was to be directed to producing before the eye of the reader an organic process of the development and movement of that which is essentially Platonic, and to transfer this process, as much as possible, into its own inner activity. In accordance with the thorough teleological character of Platonism, the whole was so to be displayed as to render expressly prominent its characters as having an aim and purpose. I believed further that I need have no hesitation in here and there sacrificing scientific precision to intelligibility.

[2] It seemed to me entirely inadmissible and highly un-Platonic to interrupt, every moment, the vital connection of the following series of ideas, drawn chiefly from Plato, by citations and proof passages, which, by their nature, are only *atomistic*, and therefore un-Platonic. He who would be thoroughly convinced of the real Platonic character of what is said, will do best to investigate carefully Plato's works. But for those who adhere rather to the single, numerically accumulating parts than to the living whole, I will adduce in order the most fertile and convincing passages in his writings, in which my representation is principally based. The flight

philosophical natures. They are satisfied, neither with an answer given them by others, nor by one afforded halfway in the examination: they desire *of themselves* and *completely* to attain the object after which they strive.

That, after which thought inquires, it declares with sufficient plainness, viz.; that which *is, existence* and the *existent.* Consequently, thought can only be satisfied by the attainment of Being; but when it has apprehended Being, it will not ask further, but feel itself really satisfied.

That which excites in us the impulse of inquiry, is the world and life which surrounds us with its everlasting change of phenomena. The universe of phenomenal things is ever in an immense flight. The soul inflamed with desire after the existent, asks everything, every phenomenon of the world: *Art thou?* But things and phenomena have no time to answer;

of things, the Becoming: Theaet. 152. d. e. [i. p. 382]. Tim. 49. c. sq. [ii. p. 355]. Being, the ever consistent, true: Tim. 27. e. 52. a. [ii. pp. 332, 358]. Phaed. 80. b. [i. p. 83]. Phil. 59. c. [iv. p. 95]. Rep. 7, 526. e. [ii. p. 216]. The existence of the non-existent, being in becoming, participation in being. Soph. 257. a. sq. Conv. 208. a. sq. [iii. pp. 168, 549 eq.]. Phaed. 100. b. c. [i. p. 106]. Thinking a *questioning*, and questioning out, *i.e.*, intellectual regaining of the existent. Theaet. 189. e. Phaedr. 249. b. c. [i. pp. 428–9, 325]. Soph. 263. e. [iii. p. 177]. Rep. 6, 490. b. Tim. 51. e. sq. [ii. pp. 176, 358]. Stages of knowledge, conception, opinion, knowledge of the understanding, insight of the reason: Phil. 39. a. 59. b. [iv. pp. 58, 94]. Tim. 27. e. Rep. 6, 511. d. e. [ii. 332, 200–1]. Conceptions, and their objects, the Ideas: Phaedr. 237. c, d. [i. p. 312]. Rep. 6, 510. c. sq. 7, 534, a. sq. 10, 596. sq. [ii. pp. 199, 200; 223, 285]. Parm. 132. a. sq. Crat. 389. a. sq. [iii. pp. 412, 293]. Phil. 15. b. sq. 16 c. sq. [iv. pp. 11, 14]. The idea of Good, the highest. Rep. 7, 517. b c. [ii. p. 205]. Connection of ideas, Science; Philosophy the science of the True in opposition to knowledge of the seeming: Rep. 5, 478. a. 7, 515. b. sq. 535. b. sq. [ii. pp. 166, 203, 224, etc.]. Theaet. 185. c. sq. [i. p. 422]. Phil. 58. a. [iv. pp. 92, 93]. Dialectics, the most important part of philosophy. Rep. 7, 532. b. [ii. p. 223]. Soph. 253. d. [iii. p. 161]. Phil. 57. e. [iv. p. 91]. God, knowing and willing, spirit and power, all-moving: (Life). Tim. 68. d. [ii. p. 379]. Phil. 30. c. eq. [iv. pp. 41, 42]. Phaedr. 245. c. sq. [i. p. 321]. Soph. 248. b. sq. [iii. p. 152]. Moral evil, and its power, connected with the nature of

for, in an instant, the stream of movement and change has caught them and borne them away.

Yet, that in us which calls the phenomena to account, allows itself to be neither mocked nor deafened by this endless flight, rather, so soon as it has felt its inner power and essentiality, it keeps itself firm and unterrified within itself, and knows how to grow up to the everlastingly moved, and even to surpass it. Therefore, it struggles with it, and does not leave it until it has wrung from it the confession of its essential character.—(Cf. Genesis xxxii. 26.)

For, in the fact that the mind is conscious of this questioning is contained the certainty for it, both that there is such Being as it inquires after, and that this is comprehensible by it, otherwise, the asking thereafter would or could not at all arise in the mind. Only therefore by penetration, endurance, and

the mutable: Tim. 48. a. sq. Rep. 10, 608. e. sq. [ii. pp. 353, 299]. Pol. 269. e. sq. [iii. p. 210]. Legg. 10, 896. e. 897. d. [v. p. 425. sq.]. The *animal* part of the life of the soul: Pol. 309. c. e. [iii. pp. 276–7]. Rep. 9. 589. d. [ii. p. 280]. The unhappiness of the servants of sense and sin, both in life and after death. Rep. 4, 445. b. c. 9, 574. a. sq. 586. a. sq. 579. d. 10, 613. d. Tim. 86. b. sq. [ii. pp. 130, 263, 276, 268, 304, 402]. Gorg. 493. b. c. 507. c. d. 524, e. sq. Phaedr. 81. c. sq. [i. pp. 191, 192, 210, 229, 84]. Wisdom, a *Saviour;* Phaedr. 82. e. sq. Prot. 352. b. c. Phaedr. 249. c. sq. [i. pp. 86, 283, 325, sq.]. Rep. 7, 515. e. sq. 10, 611. d. e. [ii. pp. 203, 302]. True self-knowledge, painful separation from the world of illusion: Rep. 7, 515. e. 527. c. 533. d. 10, 611. d. [ii. pp. 203, 216, 223, 302]. Phaed. 80. b. [i. p. 83]. Alc. 1, 133. b. [iv. p. 366]. Turning to the everlasting kingdom of truth: Phaedr. 248. b. [i. p. 324]. Rep. 6, 508. b. 7, 521. c. sq. [ii. pp. 197, 209. sq.]. Pure love, a condition of true knowledge: Rep. 6, 490. b. c. [ii. p. 176]. Conv. 210. a. sq. [iii. p. 550]. Phaedr. 256. e. sq. [i. p. 333]. Organic connection of Physics, Ethics, Dialectics; world and nature, one whole: Rep. 6, 508. a. sq. 7, 523. a. sq. Tim. 30. d. eq. 37. a. sq. [ii. pp. 197, 211; 334, 340]. Pol. 273. b. e. Men. 81. c. d. [iii. pp. 216, 20]. Phaedr. 269. e. [i. p. 349]. Order, harmony, number and measure, beauty: Gorg. 508. a. Prot. 326. b. [i. pp. 210, 254]. Phil. 18. a. 64. e. [iv. pp. 19, 105]. Significance of music: Rep. 3, 401. d. [ii. p. 84]. Legg. 3, 689. d. [v. p. 99]. End of all life and endeavour: Conv. 205. a. [iii. p. 538]. Phil. 20. d. [iv. p. 23]. Legg. 10, 904. [v. p. 444].

sacred earnestness, can Being be attained by thought; the many unsuccessful attempts cannot affright the brave heart.

But if thought can attain to Being and receive it into itself, then the two cannot be originally and essentially distinct. Rather must thought resemble Being in its innermost essence, and the two must somewhere lap over and be one with each other. The attainment of the thinking mind to Being should accordingly be styled not so much a union, as a reunion.

This reunion however would be neither necessary nor difficult if there were not on the other hand also a separation. There is therefore separation only not absolute but relative. But from this it follows, at the same time, that the reunion also can only be relative, or proceeding into the endless, since the separating element never would have been nor could be the separating, if it could ever entirely cease to exist as the separating. The re-apprehension of Being by thought cannot take place thoroughly, much less be accomplished by a single stroke.

The relative comprehension of Being devolves on thought as a perception or as a knowing. Perfect knowledge man cannot possess in this life, he can only glory in a purely loving endeavour thereafter. The more knowing a man thinks himself to be, the further is he from true knowledge. The beginning of true wisdom is to not yet consider one's-self wise.

What then is that separating element which allows to the inquiring mind only a gradual apprehension? Since it cannot be Being itself, it can be nothing else than the counterpart of Being, or different to it, or the non-existent; since it is never and nowhere apprehended as Being and the existent, we call it the Becoming.

The Becoming as such is evidently not merely something without the thinking subject and lying opposite to it, so that the thinker advancing towards the existent could avoid it, or allow it to remain on one side; much rather by its power does it hold and condition the mind from all sides, and penetrates also with sufficient versatility into the whole course of thought,

producing within the soul as rapid and constant a change of thoughts, as without it an uninterrupted change of colours and forms.

Thus then we recognize the existent, ever the same; and the becoming, ever different, to be essential opposites, and perceive at the same time, that the determination or true conception of their true relation to each other forms the first and greatest problem for the thinker, and that the successful navigation of the high seas of knowledge depends on the safe passage through these perilous straits.

Being and Becoming were the Sylla and Charybdis of the earlier thinkers; the whirlpool of the becoming engulphed some, the others were shattered on the rocks of the existent.

Were there nothing but the sensible, ever changing, were everything apprehended in an incessant flux, as the materialists and the Ionic muses maintained, no knowledge or science at all would be possible: for the inquirer could disclose nothing of that which he had apprehended, because he himself as well as that which he apprehended, was changing his nature every moment. And yet there is science and knowledge. There must be, therefore, besides the changing, something which remains ever the same.

But were there nothing but the existent, and had that which remains the same, singly and alone, existence of and in itself, no error would be possible, nor any knowledge of the becoming: for then, since nothing at all would exist besides being, thought would be always on or in the existent, and therefore could neither err nor think of things in a state of becoming.

Now, if accordingly we are to hold fast both, and are not permitted to deny one in favour of the other, neither the existent nor the becoming, and yet may not oppose the two to each other as fixed antitheses, then the correct conception of the difficult relation can, in the first instance, be derived only from the more correct apprehension of the becoming or the non-existent.

Being, in so far as it conditions knowledge, was rightly apprehended by the Eleatics; their chief fault consisted in ignoring the being of the non-existent. To recognize the being of the non-existent is of the utmost importance to philosophy.

The non-existent is not perhaps *not*, but it *is;* but its being is not the being of the existent. The ugly has as good an existence as the beautiful, although, it is a non-existent; viz., in respect of the existence of the beautiful.

But when once the being of the non-existent is perceived, then soon comes out clearly the true relation between being and becoming, and the living unity of the two.

If this unity, as decided above, does not consist in setting aside either the one or the other, it consists still less in the contemporary elevation of both, or in mixing them together in equal parts; but, in their reciprocal relation to each other, and in a higher third or first in which both are contained, and from which both equally of necessity proceed.

The non-existent being then, as we have shown, a being different from the existent, it is not absolutely opposed to the existent, but to the not being different to the existent, that is, the existence of the existent; and the relation is accordingly so constituted, that the one existence conditions and comprehends, within itself, the two antitheses, the existence of the existent, and the non-existence of the existent, or the becoming. False, therefore, is every apprehension of the becoming which makes existence absolutely the exact opposite of becoming; there is as little a direct opposition between becoming and existing, as between the existence of the existent and existence; but the opposition appears merely between the existence of the existent and the becoming.

The becoming is, in itself, the undetermined: the existence of the existent is consequently the determined: the becoming makes itself known, in apparent determinations, in modes and forms: this can proceed only from the relation in which the becoming stands to the existing determinations or determined

existences, and the part it takes in them. The determinate existences are ideas. As there is a world of phenomena, so there is a world of ideas, which have a constant and intimate relation to the non-existence of the existent, *i.e.*, the phenomenal.

Phenomena are related to ideas, as appearance to essence, or as the not-true to the true. The apprehension of the true is like the perception of the existent, or the existent is the true. Since now phenomena are without participation in the existent, so here also the origin of deception and error becomes plain and explicable. Error is nothing else than the equalization of the non-existent and the existent, which is possible by virtue of the existence of the non-existent. He who conceives or expresses a non-existent, as if it were an existent, fails or errs.

But from this it follows, at the same time, that however diverse and opposite the existent and the non-existent always are, still the two worlds, that of ideas and that of phenomena, are closely connected with each other. Had ideas, as the idealists say, ever only a pure existence in and of themselves, and were they not joined to each other and the becoming, they could neither be known, nor represented and arranged in scientific categories. The knowableness of ideas necessarily presupposes a certain passive relation of them; yet this passivity cannot be such as to change their nature.

This passivity may also be regarded, on the other hand, as an acting and working; for the thinking subject does not make the existent by his thinking, but the existent by its existence renders the thinking true perception. Powerful or *living* is, therefore, to be taken as the correct designation of the relation which obtains between ideas, and between them and the phenomenal world. The former are ever in and for the latter, neither of the two worlds is ever without the other. The non-existent wills ever to become existent, because the existent is ever existent, not for itself, but for the becoming. There is a demonstrable living connection of the existent and the becoming in every conception; every conception has, in

itself at the same time, the one and the many, and expresses the one no less than the many, even as a word is a unit as a sound, and at the same time a multiplicity of single letters.

This living connection remains incomprehensible as to its true nature so long as thought stops with the antitheses as such. The mutual relation of these antitheses can be livingly known only from that higher unity which ever lies at the base of antitheses.

This higher unity, which is the cause and condition of all being, as well as of all becoming and motion, without itself being conditioned by either, and without being of the kind or nature of either, is God.

That God is the cause and condition of all being and becoming, cannot possibly be thought of as a passivity in God, that is, God cannot have become a cause by anything but Himself. Rather is God He who determines the universe from and by Himself; or, as a cause, He is *voluntary*.

The voluntary is, at the same time, the intelligent cause, for the true unity and balancing of antitheses, which is neither their annihilation nor their intermingling, can only take place in that intelligence, which is, at the same time, their volition.

But God being apprehended as both the intelligent and voluntary cause, or as the living original unity of all being and becoming, He is not hereby known in His purest immediateness, but from that point only where all supposition and presupposition begins and ceases. Higher than to this point, or to the perception of that existence, which must not be presupposed, and which is the original cause of all things, thought cannot rise.

The existent is to be conceived of as the true; the cause of existence, or that by which the existent is existent,—the ultimate and highest ground of existence, is the good. The idea of the good is the highest idea of cognizable existence.

God is not the idea of the good itself; the idea of the good

only expresses most perfectly that which God is to all being and becoming, the paternity and operation of God.

The becoming or being different, is, in reference to God, as little a dead opposite to Him, as is being; it is not, perhaps, a somewhat which might exist with or without Him, and without His knowing or willing it, so that He must put up with its existence; but ever as He wills the existent, He wills also the being-different, in order that this different may be infinitely comprehended, filled, penetrated, and glorified by the existent.

Here then, in God and the Divine Being, is the fulness of the true and the good: hither must thought be directed; hither must man look and strive, if he will perceive the true and participate in the good.

But the full and true turning of human life to the heavenly source of all goodness and truth, is as difficult as rare. For man is usually subject to another propensity, which seizes upon him mightily and even threatens to remove him further and further from the Divine Being. He must first be delivered from the power of this propensity before he can again approach to God.

This propensity proceeds from the non-existent, with which human life, as a becoming, is intimately connected. The non-existent has necessarily a certain weight and force, which is ever fleeing the Divine existence. For without this it could not maintain itself in its relative existence; the determined and the determining must themselves cease, if the determinable should cease to strive on into the purely undetermined.

The striving after the undetermined, which there is in all becoming, or which belongs to the nature of the becoming, is opposed to the existence and striving of the ideas, which ever act in the same manner, and desire by their own determinateness to render all becoming determinate.

Now, as by this means, in the great world-life opposite movements, even entire revolutions might arise, according as the self-power of the world, or the divine power of the existent

in it (in its soul), obtains the momentary preponderance, so the life of man, who stands not above but within the oppositions, is subject to a similar fate.

By the equalization or identification of the non-existent and the existent, arises error or the false; by the elevation of the non-existent above the existent, or of the conditioned above the conditioning, arises perversion or the bad. Error and sin spring from the same potentiality, viz., from the universal capacity of the non-existent to take part in the existent, and consequently to appear as the existent. What renders error so dangerous, viz., the appearance of truth; that also renders the bad so dangerous, viz., the appearance of goodness.

Deceived by the appearance, and striving after it, man falls into an unhappy condition. The deceitful and ruling power of appearance rests chiefly on the sensuously excitable part of the life of the soul, which is indispensable to the soul's earthly existence. As the soul-life, by virtue of the indwelling power of the existent, can rise and form itself to a higher existence, even to likeness to God; so also the bodily life, by virtue of its susceptibility, to the influences of the soul, is capable of an elevation to likeness to the soul; and, in every man, the life connecting the existence of soul and body, takes a more or less prevailing soul-like character.

The more prevailing this character becomes, the more powerfully do all the movements which proceed from without inwards affect the proper life of the soul, the more do they overweigh and hinder the proper power of the soul, its power of moving itself. And since the soul, ever moved and affected on the side of the becoming, remains without impression and unaffected from the side of the existent, but yet in consequence of its inextinguishable existence, retains an unsuppressed desire after that which is of its nature, it seeks to satisfy this desire by that which is most at its command, viz., by the sensuous; knowing nothing but this, and yet feeling its need of knowing and having the existent, it sets the phenomenal in the place of the

real and true, and expects, by ever-new apprehension and induction thereof, to satisfy this constantly felt innermost vacuity.

The bonds of this illusion would be more easily sundered, if it were not so intimately connected with a heightened feeling of life. For *life is movement*,—movement promoted, life is pleasure and joy, hindered and suppressed, suffering and pain,—in the life of the body as in that of the soul. Hence the violent love of the sensuous soul to the sensuous world, and to the attractive, exciting change of its forms and conditions, whereby the mobility of the conceptions and feelings is maintained in ever rapid circulation.

The more changeful, however, such a life becomes, the more does it hasten to its destruction, the more does it fall under that undeifying power which we have recognised as the wishing to be free from all determinateness, which is necessarily attached to the non-existent; the longer such a life lasts, the more void and ugly, the more rent and ruined will it both inwardly and outwardly become.

For since the soul also, like every conception, has in itself, at the same time, unity and multiplicity, so by the constant excitement of the soul by the many and the various, its unity is weakened, its power of multiplicity on the other hand is infinitely strengthened; and so the whole of its single power is sundered and distracted a thousand-fold, the unity of its consciousness is overpowered or choked by the mass of impression, and the whole life of such a man is an unceasing vacillation, a being drawn unresistingly hither and thither.

Unhappier still than in life is the condition after death of the man who is given up to illusion and desire. For the existence of the soul cannot be destroyed; therefore it does not cease in death, because nothing existent can ever be or become a nothing. But the soul which is filled and laden with the material merely, can, and must, after the extinction of that life which was pre-eminently adapted to susceptibility for the higher,

only sink still deeper into the non-existent, to which it has resigned and assimilated itself.

But if now the life of the soul is in this manner threatened, whether living or dying, with a terrible surrounding by the power of the non-existent, the existence and efficiency of a power to save the soul, and to raise it to its true being, are manifestly the most urgent necessity of human life.

And how could such a power and efficiency be wanting to life, since all earthly life is organized throughout for participation in heavenly existence, and to be moulded according to the eternal ideas?

If not as the only one, yet as the most efficient power to lead back the unbridled, irregular life to safety and order, and to assist the perplexed and degraded soul to its natural elevation and dignity, does Philosophy, the science of the truly existent, which had its origin in pure love of the truth, present itself.

This, then, is the value and significance, this the task of philosophy, to penetrate life with the power of the existent, raising the soul-life from the contemplation of the vain and perishable, to the apprehension of the permanent and eternal, and rendering the soul, filled with the existent, a fountain streaming forth the existent for the whole life.

Philosophy accordingly applies itself first to the existent in man, and must always proceed first to effect a clear consciousness of his own proper self, or of the existent in him. Only in proportion as it succeeds in this, will it be possible for it to lead man to a recognition and apprehension of the existent without and above him.

When a man has recognised his personality, then likewise is opened the eye of his soul, or the inner sense for the whole rich world of the existent; and science, far from teaching it, or inspiring it with the conceptions of divine things, has nothing further to do than to give the soul awakened to a true capacity of reflection, the right direction and position, and to take out of

the way that which obscures and conceals the ideas, and deprives the mind of the view of their luminous existence.

But the self-recognition of man is essentially and necessarily connected with a self-separation also: man cannot comprehend his identity, without, at the same time, perceiving the non-identical or different from himself; or the apprehending one's-self is necessarily also a distinguishing one's-self.

Hence the first feelings which philosophy produces in man, so soon as it begins to operate, can never be agreeable, or feelings of delight; they are rather feelings of pain, because the first labour which philosophy undertakes is separation, viz., of the existent from the non-existent. Excitement, unrest, disunion, confusion, consternation, fill the soul, when the falseness of its entire stock of images and conceptions is more clearly disclosed than before; the contradiction, often smoothed over, is now developed more strongly than ever within him, extends itself more powerfully than ever outwards in all directions, and draws more irresistibly than ever all that is visible and conceivable into its destructive contest; the soul itself, seized by it, toils long in vain, either to bind or to loose it.

Yet the power which can wake the slumbering contradiction and rouse it to full life, understands also how to master and to govern it with sure hand; as also, in the great whole of the world life, the spiritual might of the divine existence leads all that is disunited sooner or later to glorious union and rest.

But when, after long stagnation, the true movement of thought has begun powerfully in the mind, it strides forward, so soon as it has obtained some favouring guidance, indefatigably until it reaches its aim; when first the longing for questioning has entered deeply and seriously into the inner life, it struggles and toils through all obscure opinion, illusion, poetizing, and dreams, to a clear perception of the truly existent, which gleams out towards it more clearly at every progress on its arduous way.

It is evident, that only the purest and highest activity of the mind can accomplish this. For, as we do not see *with* the eyes,

but only *through* them, so we cannot grasp the existent which gleams before us, by means of the feeling which it excites in the soul, but only through it. The conceptions and feelings do not express the truth; they only address the mind within us, and excite it to engage itself thoroughly and earnestly with them.

The highest mental activity excited in this way must consist essentially in sundering and binding, in separating and uniting, in determining and arranging; for that which the conceptions and feelings furnish to the thinking mind is a chaotic mass, a variegated and indeterminate medley. From this mass thought has to separate the real contents, and to unite them with the mind, to comprise the many and indeterminate in unities and determinates, and to connect them with each other, according as the recognised nature of their relations to each other demands.

The pure determining movement of thought through the mass of conceptions, must be free from all arbitrariness, and something entirely different from a chance guessing and imagining, or a rushing to and clutching, as when one clutches in a dove-cot at a venture to catch a pigeon: it must rather be uniform, and proceed in strict sequence from first to second, and so forth; and when what follows contradicts what precedes, it must ever return to the commencement, from which the conclusions have been developed, until the correct series of conclusions is connected with the right starting-point.

The difficult art of thinking conformably to rule, is Dialectics. It is the perfectly developed and cultivated interrogatory impulse of the soul after the truly existent. That which it takes from the mass of representations as the determinate, connected and arranged, is conceptions. Conceptions stand, so to speak, midway between sensuous forms and supersensuous ideas; in them do the former as well as the latter mirror themselves; for the inner world of feelings and representations is like the outer world in obscurity or in twilight, in which the determinations of things are blended. Dialectic thinking is like in-coming day-

light, which renders perceptible as well the forms of the intellectual world, as also the boundaries and relations between light and shade, between existence and non-existence.

As opinion has a preliminary stage in sensuous impression, so also has dialectics in mathematics. Mathematics stands lower than dialectics, because its conceptions are still not entirely pure, but dependent on images or figures, and because it does not proceed beyond the hypothesis to the unhypothetical; it is, however, indispensable to philosophical cultivation, and without mathematics true dialectics is impossible.

True dialectics, which rests on a securely apprehended basis, and from this leads out the inquiring soul to all truth, is the most essential and most important part of philosophy; yea, it is properly the whole of philosophy itself.

The dialectic movement must necessarily have a twofold direction, from the existent to the non-existent, or from non-existent to existent: the latter moves in hypothesis to the unhypothetical; the former moves in pure conceptions to the infinite.

Two errors lie extraordinarily near to dialectics; it has fallen into both. Since, namely, it has to apprehend the determinate in the indeterminate, and, on the other hand, to proceed from existent to non-existent, and since both antitheses seem to touch each other, it is threatened with the danger of precipitancy. With this precipitancy almost all dialecticians have been chargeable; they have for the most part passed over the intermediate conceptions, which are everywhere so important, and have advanced to the determinate, as the first, and then immediately to the indeterminate, as the second, or by the reverse process.

True comprehension does not consist in this, that, after the first grasping out and apprehension of the existent, we immediately let the rest go, and soar away into the infinite, but that we continue our graspings so long as there is anything to be apprehended which has any share in existence.

The other danger to dialectics springs from its constant in-

tercourse with antitheses and contradictions, and from its art and power of loosing and binding these. If the charm which lies in this exercises a powerful and determining influence on the mind of the thinker, he will forget what is the proper object and nature of dialectics, and will use it for nothing but to carry on his empty and frivolous play with thoughts and conceptions.

For dialectics to correspond to its true definition, for it to lead the soul gradually upwards from the region of the senses to that eternal kingdom in which the truly good reigns enthroned, it must never forget nor give up its ministering relation to the true and the good. If it does so, and wishes to subordinate thought to itself, instead of subordinating itself together with thought to the true and the good, it not only misses its true aim, without ever attaining the true, but it operates all the more prejudicially on the soul and life, as more effective powers are at its command than at that of other things and phenomena.

The appearance of wisdom with which sophistry dazzles, is far more dangerous and ruinous to the soul than all the other dangers which threaten it from ignorance, illusion, and the passions. The dazzling of apparent wisdom does not, however, operate through the satisfaction which it affords to the depths of the soul, for the soul can never feel satisfied by mere show; but it operates by powerfully exciting only the sensuous covering of the soul, and here counterfeits that hearty admiration and delight which is called forth in the soul by the view of the truly good.

And thus it is seen that science, as to its inmost essence, is rooted in *pure love*, and is exclusively conditioned by nobility of disposition. Only unselfish love to the truly existent leads and attains thereto, because the divine can be recognised and comprehended only by that which is like it; and ethics, which, on the one hand, presents itself as a branch and offshoot of dialectics, shows itself, on the other, as not less its ground and germ.

Ethics has for its purpose a truly rational shaping and perfection of the whole human life, the internal as well as the external. It is, moreover, not a special science, distinct from dialectics, but only one side of dialectics, or much rather dialectics itself, apprehended in its efficient relation to human conduct and life.

The ethical condition of life and of all human relations depends on the dominion which wisdom has attained and exercises. For since all moral evil proceeds from the helpless dependence on the sensuously moved into which the spiritually moving has fallen, and since this dependence has its ground only in the ignorance which, knowing nothing of the original moving principle, and attracted merely towards the sensuous, regards this as the causal principle of all existence and movement, so the power of evil is broken, and the good is established in its efficiency, whenever the clear perception of divine things enters in the place of this error. *True insight*, which is not at the same time *virtue*, is impossible, because insight takes place only through the intimate connection into which human thought has entered with eternal being; as the causal principle of all life, thought can ever only perceive the true and the good in so far as it participates in them, and feels thereby its own existence (seyendheit) promoted and more highly developed.

The idea of the Good is, accordingly, related to the intellectual world and human perception, as the sun to the earth and the eye. As the sun is the cause of life, and the condition of seeing, so the Good is the cause of existence and perception. As the eye would not be enabled to see by a beam of light, if it were not already by its nature like the sun and light, so the mind would not be able to think the idea of the Good, if its essence did not consist in a nature like the Good. That which dwells in the eye and the mind, as adaptation and potentiality, is in real vision and perception raised to its fullest reality, and fills therefore the form of its idea with most real contents; vision is

the real illumination of which the eye is capable, perception is the real being-good of which the mind is capable.

Thus, then, is repeated in general, in the ethical sphere of human thought and action, the whole life of visible nature, as, by virtue of the thorough inter-adaptation of Being and Becoming, cannot at all be otherwise; and the whole of Ethics, viewed from this side, makes itself known as a Physics, which is rightly understood or carried through in a true scientific manner in the life of the intellect.

From this, at the same time, appears distinctly the intimate connection between physics and dialectics, since the scientific carrying of physics into human relations can be no other than a dialectical one. As ethics, with respect to dialectics, is at the same time ground and consequence, so is this not less the case with respect to physics and dialectics. Dialectics is the mother of physics, in so far as dialectics goes through nature, in order from everything in it becoming, to meet and apprehend the corresponding existent which lies at its base; dialectics is, however, also the daughter of physics, in so far as all dialectic movement in the mind is only the reproduction of the great and eternal world-dialectics, in which the different ever contradicts the identical, and is ever more powerfully grasped and united by the identical.

Hence, then, also the attentive and serious consideration of nature is exceedingly adapted to excite and conduct the mind to true thought and perception. For the soul feels, now more now less, that with the sensuous phenomena spirits enter, which urge their recognition on the mind, and liberation from the non-existent as such. Especially does the slumbering thought feel itself strongly incited to dialectic movement and activity by all these phenomena, which make at the same time with the impression of homogeneity, that also of heterogeneity and antithesis.

These spirits are nothing but the eternal ideas, according to and through which God has formed the world. For the world

is a science, and science is a world. As science is the system of conceptions, and as the system arises only by the correct connection and arrangement of different series of conceptions and spheres, so the world viewed from God, is the faultless conjunction of all possible forces and operations of all that is visible and conceivable.

The relations of ideas to phenomena, and of the moving forces to the generated movements, must, from their nature, be determinate, since their causes are determinate and determining. The real determinateness of these relations consists in *number* and *measure*. All endeavour to comprehend the phenomena and movements, must accordingly be directed to the investigation of the number and form by which the indeterminate in itself is comprised in this and no other determination. If the determinate unity of the manifold is perceived, there must also be sought out the relation of this unity to every one connected with it, and to the highest.

The manner and power of comprising the many and various in unity, and the more or less complete enstampment of the indeterminate on the determinate, conditionate the impression of the phenomenal on the soul. The purer and more correspondent the movements are to the relations of numbers, which lie at their base, the more powerfully and determinately is the form filled by its contents, the more satisfying must be the operation of sensuous things on the rational spirit of man, because he then feels more distinctly his own powerful existence and efficiency, which are throughout at the same time regulating and regulated.

The correspondent or correct relation between matter, form, and spirit, or between moveable, moved and moving, is harmony. Harmony, however, is beauty, and the purest representation of the beautiful, in so far as it makes itself known to man from the world life, is illusive. For music is, as it were, the harmony, welling forth from nature, which, in ordered and clearly defined sequence of tones, will make known to the human consciousness that eternal symphony and rhythm which sounds with undi-

minished power throughout the universe, and in which quiring the constellations move.

Now, the harmony which lives in the works of the Creator, presents itself also in the life of the soul and of men,—in the former as pure *morality*, in the latter as the *perfect State*. For virtue is harmony, or that beauty of action and life which arises through the regulating and all-rhythmically moving power of the rational spirit; and the State is the harmonious, powerful constitution of the rational soul, brought out from the inner life of the individual into the life of the nation.

But, if now the harmonious is essential in the conception of the beautiful, and the beautiful is nothing but the realization of the true and the good, from this proceeds not only the ethical influence which music has and must have, as the purest of the fine arts, but the intimate relation is also evident which exists between philosophy and music, since both pursue the same object, viz., the harmonious culture of man and his whole life. In this respect, music must be conceived of as philosophy, and philosophy as the highest music.

And so men in general perceive: the more nearly by true philosophizing they approach the divine unity of being and knowing, the more also do they perceive the inner striving of all the Many towards the One, and the wondrous organization in the life of the great whole, in consequence of which the one is ever the type or copy of the other, and in which the power of the eternal existence fills and moves every point of the infinite non-existence, according to the measure of its receptivity; by which process the ultimate object of the universe—viz., the closest possible resemblance to God of the individual and of the whole—is attained in the most perfect possible manner.'

We have seen Platonism grow up out of a single germ, and unfold itself in various directions, and will now organically conclude the organic process of this development, by drawing together again the whole of these manifold tendencies into a single point, which, as the seed-corn of the plant, comprises within

itself the sum of the perfect image. The whole system of the Platonic philosophy proceeds from two original parts, and the point at which these two meet, exerting a spiritual or fertilizing influence on each other, is the living germ from which the whole system is developed. These two original parts are: Reason is not a becoming, but an existent,[3] and that which penetrates and explains the totality of things is analogy;[4] the point, however, is the living consciousness of the one eternal spirit in the universe of things.

It is at once perfectly clear how Plato by that first judgment raises himself decidedly above all empiricism, since the reason, empirically apprehended, appears throughout as a becoming, gradually awaking thing; how, further, from the coexistence of theses and antitheses in the first judgment is produced the whole dialectic mode of cognition; and how with the existence of the reason is given or expressed not only the possibility and reality of knowledge,[5] but also the connection of wisdom and virtue, and the entire belief in immortality: for if the reason is not becoming, but existent, its knowledge can only be the knowledge of the existent; and it needs not, in order to obtain this knowledge, to go out of itself, needing rather only to know its own being, if it would know the existent. But, if it knows its existence, it has herein also its virtue and imperishability: for the knowledge of existence is the human being filled by the divine, and the existent, as such, is the permanent and unchanging. Thus, with some attention,

[3] Cf. Rep. 10, 611, b, d. [ii. p. 302]. Legg. 5, 726. a. [v. p. 153]. Phaed. 83. a, b. [i. p. 86].

[4] Cf. Tim. 56. c. 69. b. [ii. pp. 365, 379]. Plato's genius was chiefly expressed in the perception of this analogy, and in its pursuit through the whole of life and thought; his acute critical understanding preserved him in this from excess and extravagance. The fanciful hunting after analogies of some natural philosophers, was a practice he never indulged in.

[5] Plato forcibly presented the possibility and reality of knowledge, especially in opposition to the Sophists, who denied or questioned this, and allowed nothing but vacillating opinion, and an appearance of truth.

is sufficiently evident, especially from the second part, the whole cosmology and theology of Plato: the history of nature and the world is seen, according to the Platonic principle, to be the magnified picture of that life, whose type we behold in the life of men and of the soul; and as the height mirrors itself in the depth, and the spirit in light, so from the pure lineaments and movements[6] of the soul shines forth the spiritual image of that divine existence, which is the fountain of all things, and to which all things tend. Self-knowledge, self-apprehension, and love, in the correct and ethical sense of the word, follow accordingly from the germ-point mentioned and what has just been intimated, as the most important and instructive problem for all philosophical striving; and the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν of Socrates is consequently the true δός μοι ποῦ στῶ[7] from which Plato raises the chaotic mass of all conceptions and impulses to a well-ordered and illuminated world of thought.

Now, whether this sketch be a true outline of the Platonic philosophy as it is contained in Plato's writings, may, perhaps, be less doubtful than whether, in general, any presentation of his true philosophy can be given from Plato's writings. The latter, those at least will hold to be impossible who think themselves obliged to distinguish between the esoteric and the exoteric philosophy of Plato. In what respect this, in itself, inadmissible distinction may perhaps be justified, will best be seen by a glance at the practical tendency of Platonism.

It cannot for a moment be denied that the whole Platonic philosophy, as it lies before us in Plato's writings, has throughout a view to, and applies itself to, real life. This is placed beyond a doubt, even by the single circumstance, that Socrates appears in all the dialogues, and in almost all as the chief personage. It is Socrates who either occasions the conversa-

[6] Tim. 90. d. [ii. p. 407].

[7] Hence the sentence, "Every soul of man has, from its very nature, beheld real existences," rightly understood, may be regarded as the fundamental dogma of the Plat. philosophy. Phaedr. 249. e. [i. p. 326].

tions, and conducts the examinations, or forms the axis around which the transactions revolve. In Socrates, however, generally, and in the Socrates of Plato especially, nothing is presented but philosophy become concrete; he is the realized idea of wisdom, in which knowledge and life have interpenetrated each other, and become one. And thus, also, the Platonic philosophy serves as the friendly mediator, which has founded and promoted the reciprocal relation between the school and practical life. He is the organ and representative of the former as well as of the latter.

Patricius describes this mediatorship of the Platonic Socrates in a somewhat narrow and one-sided but yet original manner.[8] He regards him as a physician, who endeavoured to cure the sickly life of his time by true philosophy, and indeed, so to speak, in the homœopathic method. The greatest danger, in the opinion of Socrates, threatened the life of his country by the growing corruption of youth, especially of those rich and respectable young men who would attain to future power and influence. The source of this corruption was threefold, founded in the threefold spiritual activity of men, and in this also ever finding the greatest susceptibility; from the desire for pleasure had sprung paederasty; from irascible strength of mind had been engendered intriguing and ambitious politics; and the intellectual delight of dismembering and refuting was the origin of fine-speaking and sophistry. Since now the lustful, ambitious, and contentious forces of the soul exist in every man, it is easily understood why the Paederasts, Politicians, and Sophists met with such easy success in attracting young men, and in exercising a powerful influence over them. This influence Socrates desired to counteract vigorously, to remove it even, and substitute his own wholesome influence in its place, by apparently joining himself to these destructive tendencies, in order to procure intercourse with the young men, and be

[8] *Patrio.* Plat. exoter. Bl. 42. b. Cf. Rep. 6. 492. a. [ii. p. 178]. Alc. 1, 132. a. [iv. p. 364].

able to operate on them the more unostensibly. He endeavoured by his pretended paederasty to supplant the common and shameful vice, and to kindle in its stead, in their youthful souls, an enthusiastic love for all the beautiful and good: he placed himself in the position of a gossiping Sophist, and everywhere entered into conversations, in order apparently without object to unmask and overthrow everywhere the hollow sophistry: he sought to befriend himself with all brave and aspiring youths, in order to give their ambition the right direction, and to convince them that the joy of self-government is greater and more noble than the joy of dominion over others.

But however this may be, it is sufficient for us that it must be firmly held as an essential trait of the Socratico-Platonic philosophy, that it laboured to attain a political and practical significance in the noblest sense of the word. Only to him who has life in view, does the genesis of the Platonic philosophy become livingly clear: he sees how Plato must bring his noble interest in the true and good to the two main questions—How is knowledge acquired and character formed? He sees, with Plato's eyes, the unhappy stunting influence of blinding errors on the former, of violent sensuous desires on the latter, and perceives with grief the abomination of desolation, which the arts, by flattering these errors and desires, are setting up both in the interior and exterior life. He feels with Plato's heart an ardent desire after health and salvation through the spiritual might of a wisdom which conducts to God.

From this intimate application of the Platonic philosophy to life is to be explained also, in great part at least, the peculiar form in which Plato wrote his philosophical works, viz., that of dialogue. All the writings of Plato, the Apology and Epistles alone excepted, are, as is well known, in the form of dialogue; and in no author has this form, which was more popular in ancient than in our own times, a so plainly expressed teleological character as in Plato. It seems to offer itself as a hand to conduct abstract thoughts into life, it mingles philosophical

interests with the interests of life, intertwines in an unconstrained manner philosophical transactions with the conversations of the day, acclimatizes the exotic growth of speculation in the great commerce of men, in so far as it is practicable and necessary.

The form of dialogue in Plato has certainly also another deeper ground and philosophical meaning, and it is strange that the great number of those who have written on Plato either appear not to have suspected this meaning and ground, notwithstanding they so evidently proceed from the essence of Platonism, or have expressed themselves much too ambiguously and superficially concerning them. Most authors on Plato, even the most recent, express themselves concerning the dialogal form of the Platonic philosophy in such a manner, that we see they suppose this form in Plato to be the result of choice and arbitrary decision, or of the author's special fondness for this species of style.[9] But this form is by no means a result of preference, but is rather peculiarly a product of philosophical necessity; it is so conditioned by the spirit, and so organically connected with the whole essence of Plato's philosophy, that this itself would be something essentially different, if it were not presented in this form. We need only recall the significance of dialectics in the whole of the Platonic philosophy to be immediately clear on this point. If thinking, in Plato's view, is an inner conference, then, of course, the writing down of this inner procedure can be nothing but a conversation;[10] if dialectics, according to Plato's conviction, is the base and summit of all philosophy, then philosophy cannot appear in a more suitable form than the dialogue; if, according to Plato's idea, philosophy is a living

[9] The statement that Plato was the first to introduce the style of dialogue into philosophy was refuted already by Athenaeus. Zeno the Eleatic wrote in dialogue before him, and after him the form came into general use, being rendered popular by Aristotle, Theophrastus, and others. Cf. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. 3. 69.

[10] Theaet. 189. e. [i. p. 428–9].

power, which goes through life, combating the false and bad, and helping the true and good to recognition and dominion, it cannot successfully allow this power and that struggle to appear in any other species of style than that which, in its constant mobility, is an image of the living mind, and allows the freest scope to all explanations and refutations.

But if now, as it has been shown, the philosophy of Plato, as contained in his writings, is ever in its spirit and form most strictly adapted to life, it is sufficiently evident from this in what sense we may speak of his esoteric and exoteric philosophy. Plato must certainly have spoken, handled his subjects, developed his thoughts otherwise, when he had before him the exclusive circle of his dearest pupils, who were already exercised in philosophizing, than when, as in his writings, he spoke to the great promiscuous multitude. For that in his writings he presupposed, if not *un*philosophical, yet far more *not* philosophical than philosophical readers, is clearly enough perceptible from the characterizations of the parties in the dialogue. They are presented, with the exception of Socrates and a few others, as the merest A B C scholars in thinking; and he who does not reflect, or does not comprehend, why Plato makes Socrates converse diligently with unripe thinkers, yea, with even such simple people,[11] might feel moved to censure severely this circumstance in the Platonic dialogues.

But when now, in accordance with these remarks, the popular philosophy of Plato is to be distinguished from his proper school philosophy, this distinction has reference not so much to its contents as to its form; and those, in fact, are not incorrect who protest against ascribing an esoteric wisdom to Plato, in the sense that he taught his confidential pupils things entirely different from those contained in his writ-

[11] Jesus also purposely selected for his disciples simple men, not yet filled with the opinions of the schools. How little they were practised in thinking, is clear from their questions and whole behaviour. Luke viii. 9, ix. 45, xviii. 34; Matt. xv. 15, sq.; John xii. 16, xvi. 18, etc.

ings.[12] In the essentials, Plato certainly taught nothing orally which he has not at least sufficiently intimated in his writings. This is vouched for by his whole style of thought, and the just discussed aim of his philosophy; we have also sufficient testimony for it in the writings of his pupil Aristotle.

But now, as regards the above sketch of Platonism, having corrected as much as may be necessary the often wrongly used conceptions of Plato's esoteric and exoteric philosophy, we must add a few more remarks, which will serve partly for explanation, and partly for confirmation.

Platonism is so organic[13] throughout, that it may be developed from every genuine germ of it: every single part permits the whole to be inferred from its disposition; every point that is vitally understood raises all the rest more or less into clear consciousness. On this account is Platonism capable of such diverse apprehensions and representations; wherever one may first apprehend it, he can from anywhere in the circumference arrive by a continued progression at the centre. It would be incorrect if either the one or the other of these modes of presentation should be declared to be absolutely the only one allowable, and all the rest to be inadmissible.

[12] It is with the so-called esoteric philosophy of Plato somewhat as with the celebrated word of our Lord, 'I have yet many things to say unto you,' etc., John xvi. 12. How many secrets has it from this been supposed that Christ withheld! And yet on a close scrutiny of the Scriptures it is plain that He expressed all that was essentially necessary for the understanding heart.

[13] Cf. above, p. 123, p. q. This organic character is especially evident from the relation which exists between Plato's Ethics, Physics, and Dialectics. See above, p. 168. This relation may be symbolized by the figure of a triangle, which plays an important part in the Plat. philosophy. Tim. 53. c. [ii. p. 361]. Plato did not, as often supposed, undervalue Physics. Tim. 29. b, c. [ii. p. 353]. Phil. 59. a. [iv. p. 94]; but he considered it the basis as well as the summit of philosophy, and there are intimations that he considered dialectics in philosophy as only the reproduction of the dialectics in the life of nature. Cf. Phaedr. 270. c. [i. p. 349]. Tim. 47. b, c. 90. d. Rep. 7, 532. c. 534. e. etc. [ii. pp. 353, 407; 222, 224].

But should any one desire to work from any point inwards to a true understanding of the Platonic philosophy, we must, while calling his attention to its chief and fundamental conceptions, give him, together with good counsel as to how he is to master them, at the same time also a kindly warning that he do not believe too soon that he has understood them. For nothing has from the first brought greater confusion into the whole concern, than the illusive belief that one has perfectly apprehended the fundamental Platonic conceptions, when he has succeeded by reflection in rendering their expressions intelligible to himself. This supposed acquired understanding of single Platonic conceptions is very often only apparent; it depends, for the most part, on the sense imperceptibly introduced by us into the Platonic words. The separation of these conceptions from the whole of the Platonic system, and the analytic consideration of them in this manner, will seldom conduct to a true understanding of them. This is, for the most part, arrived at by a living perception of the position which they occupy in the Platonic thought, and of the inner necessity by which they have here shaped themselves forth.

That which besides renders difficult the correct understanding of most of the fundamental Platonic conceptions, is the repetition of them in modern philosophical language. We too often think in connection with the former of that of which we are accustomed to think in connection with the latter, however much pains we take not to do so. This has happened with special frequency in the case of three of the most important conceptions of the Platonic system,—those of science, of the good, and of ideas. The frequent apprehension of these in the sense of *our* philosophical schools, must be noted as the principal source of misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Platonism.

It has often been with the Platonic conception of science, as with the conception which Luther had of faith. The chief point in both has not infrequently been overlooked, viz., that

which, however different in other respects, they have in common with each other,—the idea of *power*. Of that which, as most essential, stood in the first rank before the minds of these men, when they spoke of science and faith, we think either not at all, or else last of all.[14] And thus it is quite natural that we cannot sufficiently wonder how it is that Plato's science and Luther's faith are to be capable of such great things. For Plato ascribes to science nothing less than the reformation of human life, and Luther makes faith the alone ground of human salvation. The latter statement can, of course, meet with nothing but decided disapprobation among all those theologians who know no other faith than the manufactured article, which is the work of our arbitrary thinking; and the former must appear just as inexplicable and inadmissible to all those who, in connection with the word science, think of nothing but that which passes for such, and is so called in our life and schools. We think first and chiefly under the word science of two different things,—a certain mass of knowledge, and a certain intellectual activity forming this mass according to logical rules; whence also we speak entirely without hesitation of a multiplicity of sciences. Of such Plato knows nothing: for him there are no sciences, when he speaks in earnest,[15] but only the one science; and this is neither an encyclopædia of all things worthy to be known, nor even the sum total of all possible abstract ideas, but the *full unencumbered presence of all that which is alone true in the consciousness*. And if we would not misunderstand this, we must equally beware of the thought of

[14] Prot. 352. b, c. [i. p. 283]. The assertion that *power* is the essential point in Plato's conception of science, seems to contradict the division of all science into *theoretical* and *practical*. Pol. 258. e. [iii. p. 191]. Cf. Gorg. 450. b, c. [i. p. 140]. But it must not be overlooked that in these passages Plato does not retain the strict conception of science, but, for the sake of being easily understood, descends to the common mode of representation.

[15] The plural certainly occurs not infrequently in Plato. Pol. 258. e. etc. [iii. p. 191]. But even this passage affords a confirmation of the opinion expressed.

a mere mirroring of all the existent in our consciousness, as of the view that this fulness of the existent is one produced merely *by* and *in* the thinking human mind. Knowledge is for him, as for us, a consequence of *perception;* but his perception is widely different from that which is usually so called among us. With us, the truth *is* perceived, therefore is and remains *passive;* with Plato, *it gives itself* to be perceived, therefore shows itself to be *active:* with us, the objects of perception are, in general, like the wooden images at which archers shoot for pleasure or exercise,—we shoot at them with thoughts and conceptions, until the right conception has hit the right spot; with Plato, on the other hand, perception arises wholly by the *living reciprocal operation of the objects and the perceiving mind,* —the thinking mind labours on in their direction, until it has come, so to speak, within their electric circle, and in it becomes aware, through them, of their being and essence.[16]

It is doubtless difficult for us to imagine this, or to believe in the possibility of such a cognition, for the simple reason, that we can only artificially form for ourselves a world-consciousness of this kind, while to Plato it was natural. For where the unity of intellectual life is so divided, and sundered into activities so different and separate from each other, where the power of reflection is so completely severed from the maternal stock of fulness of impression, and has attained such independent perfection and decided superiority as among us, we can scarcely think of cognition as other than a purely immanent logical act of the understanding. However this may be, it is certain that he who does not understand the Platonic, does not understand also the Biblical cognition. For, when Jesus says: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3), he evidently means by this, quite a different perception from the

[16] Rep. 6. 490. b. [ii. p. 176]. The close connection between this idea of knowledge and the biblical, as in Gen. iv. 17; 1 Sam. i. 19, etc., is at once evident, though not always sufficiently regarded.

usual cognition of the thinking understanding; for this has often for its consequence not even a momentary vivification, not to speak of eternal life!

The Platonic conception of the good is even still more exposed to misunderstanding than the idea of science. We connect with the word "good," in general, no other than an *ethical* sense. If now we hear that Plato makes the idea of the good absolutely the highest idea, we immediately rejoice, not merely at the harmony between our way of thinking on morals and his, but also at the clear light which seems to be spread from this point over his otherwise obscure philosophy. For, should we not hope to penetrate to the comprehension of his philosophy, by means of this idea of the good, when we are so practised and at home in the consideration of it?

It is, however, a too hasty joy which the well-known sound awakes in us; and we should be glad if it were immediately brought to an end, before it give birth to and develop the errors with which it is pregnant. That which Plato understands by the good, has almost nothing in common with that which our moral systems call good; and one would almost do better to look for the root of the Platonic conception of the good in physics than in ethics. (Cf. above, p. 134, n. 2.)

The good is with us a *human* conception; with Plato, on the other hand, as the above representation must have shown, a purely *divine* conception: *i.e.*, we, when we speak of the good, have human life first in mind, and find or perceive the good in the relations of men, or in their mode of action; but when Plato speaks of the Good as of the Highest, he is not at all thinking of something which occurs in life connected with single phenomena thereof, but entirely of the all-powerful and ever-active being of the Godhead. With us, consequently, the good is weighed and measured; we have a measure for the good, it is subject to our decision, and our discernment therefore stands higher than it. Of that, on the other hand, which Plato calls the good, the human mind has neither an adequate mea

sure nor a comprehensive conception; for, if there were a suitable conception of it, it would cease to be the absolutely highest and first. According to Plato, thought and judgment can advance only to approximation to the good (see above, p. 46, nn. 43, 44), only to become participant in it, not to penetrate and comprehend it. We think of the good as relative, as a kind of being, among and with many other kinds of the same; but the good of Plato lies high and far above all relative thought and being—so far, that we may say it has properly no antithesis. The exact antithesis of the good is, according to our conception, the bad; but the good of Plato is of so peculiar nature, having all existence in itself, that it is not possible for any other thing to be in equal potency its opposite; and if we still wished to seek out and name a kind of contrary, we might designate that which is called the good among us as this contrary, with as much propriety as the bad. For, just because our good is the exact contrary of the bad, it stands on the same basis and plane with it, only in the opposite position. This basis or plane is, however, no other than the great territory of single things and varying phenomena. Since now the good of Plato is neither a single thing, nor the quality of a thing, nor a phenomenon, and belongs to an entirely different world from the world of good and bad phenomena, it is quite clear that it is radically as different from moral good as from moral evil. We must not proceed from a moral sentiment, if we would come to an understanding of the Platonic idea of the good; we must rather, for the present, abstract our thoughts from all action, and reflect merely on being; we must subtilize with Hamlet: To be, or not to be, that is the question. And when we perceive most deeply within us the answer Being is, and there is nothing but Being, then we are approaching the apprehension of the word "good" in the Platonic sense. For the good of Plato is, to indicate it by a sensuous mode of expression, the incorruptible,[17]

[17] Plato renders prominent, as we saw (p. 152), the fleeting and changeable nature of things, in order to excite the soul to more earnest longing

which endures through all change, by whose existence all else that is existent is so.

No conception of Plato, however, has been more frequently and variously misunderstood, than the equally difficult and important conception of ideas. With what we at the present day call ideas, the ideas of Plato have nothing in common but the name. This is sufficiently evident from the fact, that Plato speaks not only of ideas of the true and good, but also of ideas of a table, loom, hair, dirt, etc.[18] But however often and expressly the readers of Plato have been warned not to think of the ideas of whose existence he speaks, as something purely ideal, and not to consider them a species of thoughts, yet this is still but too frequently the case. Others, who take this warning to heart, and have kept themselves far from conceiving of the Platonic ideas as products of thought, have yet fallen into the opposite error, and have regarded and given out the Platonic ideas to be something substantial, supporting themselves in this on some passages in Plato, which certainly do seem to favour the view, that the ideas are somewhere independently existing (material) entities.[19]

Does the kind reader now expect that a short and clear definition will at once render intelligible to him the obscure nature of the Platonic ideas? That would, in fact, be a somewhat strange expectation, testifying of no particular amount of re-

after the eternal and changeless. The changeless, existent, in so far as it is perceived as really existing in the world, is the Beautiful; in its pure spiritual sense, it is the True; but in that it not merely *itself is*, but *causes* all existence, it is the Good. The close connection of these ideas is at once evident, as also the reason why Plato is so ready to contract these expressions into one.

[18] Rep. 10, 595. b. [ii. p. 284]. Parm. 130. c. [iii. p. 408]. The difficulties connected with the doctrine of Ideas are explained by Plato himself. Parm. 130. b. to 135. d.

[19] Phaed. 102. a. [i. p. 108, etc.]. Crat. 389. a. sq. [iii. p. 293]. It has been often overlooked that Plato himself attacked the one-sided idealists (probably the Megarics), and that very doctrine of ideas which has been attributed to him. Parm. 133. a. Soph. 246. b. 248. a. [iii. pp. 413; 149, 152].

flection. There would surely be scarcely a more convenient study than philosophy, if one could drop the quintessence of it into the spoon of a definition, and administer this to the student! And if so, in the present case one could say in brief: "Behold! the ideas of Plato are so and so!"—and they would be at once perfectly understood. That there are people enough who believe in such immediate impartations of an understanding in philosophical matters, and are accordingly zealous to serve each other reciprocally with such extracts, and imagine themselves to have gained a wonderful insight, when they have impressed a definition on their understanding and memory, I am well aware; but I am not less so, that no one need direct himself to such persons, if he wishes to learn how to understand or expound Plato.[20] A definition of a philosophical conception is of some assistance to him only, who, by persevering investigation, has arrived at that point that he can at all events make one for himself. As before, in the case of the Platonic conceptions of science and the good, I could give, and desired to give, no explanations adequately expressing their nature, but only indications for an independent discovery of the true way of understanding them, so, in respect of the Platonic ideas, I can do no otherwise.

He who would understand the Platonic doctrine of ideas, must seek before all things to transport himself again to that already indicated fulness and naïveté of thought, which can only find place, and has only found place, in the youthhood of philosophy. Wrong as it would be incessantly to bewail its disappearance, since it must necessarily have disappeared, in consequence of the increasing development of the understanding, it would be equally wrong if we should imagine ourselves to have come much nearer the cognition of the true, on account of this

[20] Plato gives no bare definitions. The dialectic movement of thought either precedes, begetting the definition, or follows, explaining it. That the Plat. conception of Ideas is not to be understood from short definitions, will be plain to every one who will consult any of those which have been proposed in ancient or modern times.

advanced development alone. We can certainly, by virtue of this progress, think what we do think at the present day, much more pure and unmixed than Plato could; but what our thinking has gained thereby in an *extensive* and *distinctive* respect, on the one hand, it has lost, on the other, in an *intensive* respect. The milky way has not truly gained in brilliancy, through being resolved by our telescopes into innumerable starry points. He who thinks he must smile compassionately at the sublime simplicity of the half-poetic philosopheme of the more remote antiquity, and hold it to be a baseless hypothesis, for the reason merely, that, as is quite natural, he is unable to discover that which forms its base in his own way of thinking;—he who does not unite with the consciousness of his understanding's having become sharper and richer in conceptions, the humble recognition also of his having become poor in profound substantial feeling, may never hope to be able to learn or advance anything sound and correct concerning the Platonic doctrine of ideas. We cannot, of course, escape the influence which our times and philosophy exert upon us. Hence we cannot, *e.g.*, prevent from ever again obtruding itself upon us, that view as to the relation of being to thinking which has now become the prevalent one. Poor being! in fact, it only *seems* to us to be something. Handled strictly, however, it is *nothing*, and thinking is everything, and has everything; and dried-up being derives a scanty nourishment from the crumbs which fall from the richly furnished table of thinking. In truth, it may not even venture to exist at all, without express permission on the part of thinking!

In the Platonic way of thinking the case is almost the reverse. There, not thought, but being, was the conditioning principle. Being did not then possess an existence produced and adjudged to it by thought, but an existence obtruding itself and making itself felt in thought: the ideas were not dependent on thinking,[21] but thinking was dependent on the ideas;

[21] Crat. 386. d. [iii. p. 288].

because, in Plato's belief, without the previous existence of the ideas without and above the self-developing thought of the individual, there would be no true thinking and perception at all. What we call ideas is an operation, an operation of the mind engendering various thoughts and impressions; that which Plato designates by this word is a cause,—viz., the cause and condition of scientific thinking and perception. The question as to which way of thinking is the more correct, may be set entirely on one side. Enough if we only learn gradually to comprehend what sense the word idea has in Plato![22]

The safest way to a living apprehension of the Platonic Idea proceeds from the *true apprehension of impersonality in consciousness, and this in its relation to the Godhead.* He who grasps himself in thought, and apprehends and finds *himself in himself*, and yet also at the same time in *another*, viz., in God, to him it will no longer be obscure and unintelligible what Plato meant by his ideas. But, certainly, for this distinguishing of his Ego from God, as also in order to find and feel it in Him, nothing less is required than that consciousness of God which the Scriptures call a *living God.* And with this our mind does not willingly meddle, because it is much more convenient to deal with the *abstract conception of Him*, than with *Himself.* When we speak of God, our mental eye looks in general not on Himself, but on that shadowy outline which we have made of Him for ourselves; and when it is seen how this appears, we suppose ourselves to have arrived at the knowledge of that which is signified by the word God; indeed, we are so much accustomed to think *of* God, instead of thinking *God*, that we either do not at all understand what sort of a distinction this is, or we wholly deny the possibility of thinking God. Now, in such a manner of thinking, God does not exist as a *living* God, but only as a dead thought. It will, moreover, occur to the attentive

[22] See, on the relation of conceptions to ideas, Phaedr. 249. b. Theaet. 186. a. [i. pp. 325, 423]. Rep. 7, 524. b. [ii. p. 213]. Polit. 285. a. [iii. p. 234]. Phil. 14. c. [iv. p. 11].

reader without elaborate demonstration, that the Platonic doctrine of Ideas and the Christian doctrine of Freedom are next neighbours and friends. But how the Platonic doctrine of ideas has glimmered forth in the history of philosophy like a fire under ashes, and has broken out from time to time in new form and colouring, and how, especially, it has ever been found either wholly or in part in the train of Christian views of the world and Christian tendencies of thought,—this is a phenomenon which demands, as it deserves, a particular study.

CHAPTER V.

DEFINITION OF THE CHRISTIAN ELEMENT.

Our regard must now, in the next place, be directed to Christianity, and that which forms its essence and peculiarity. For we cannot definitely perceive and designate the Christian element in Plato, until we have perceived what Christianity in general properly is.

Let us, in the first place, consider the phrase—Christian element. The word 'element' is borrowed from chemical science, and means the rudiment or first principle of a thing. The whole phrase expresses that proper element or principle of Christianity, or that essential thing, whereby it is what it is, and is distinguished from all similar surrounding forms.

Wherein, then, we now ask, consists the Christian element as such? *i.e.*, that which is peculiar and essential to Christianity?

We must turn to real life, if we would obtain the most correct and instructive answer to this question. For life and Christianity are things appertaining to each other, and bound together by God; and what God has joined together, let not man put asunder. They are not merely for each other, but in each other, and neither can be truly understood without the other. What life is, can be clearly perceived only from Christianity; and what Christianity is, is evident to him only who has life, and the relation of Christianity to life, in view. How many errors and misunderstandings would theology have spared itself and the world, if it had never ignored nor forgotten the sacred union between Christianity and life! The Bible, since it contains the

history of life in the deepest and most comprehensive sense of the word, can nowhere be so thoroughly understood as in and by life; books and studies afford almost always only an anatomical understanding of the dissected word-corpse.

Let us then direct our gaze to life and to Christianity; let us apprehend the natural state of the former and the penetrating influence of the latter, in order that we may judge therefrom what is the Christian element. For when life receives the influence of Christianity with heartfelt desire, it is Christian; when it is indifferent to it, it is not Christian; when it repels it, it is unchristian. The nature of the Christian element is accordingly most easily apprehended at the point of friendly relation between life and Christianity; it here presents itself in that which life feels as its deepest need, and which Christianity affords as the highest satisfaction of this need.

What does life desire? What does it seek and strive after most earnestly? What does it most need? For what calls its deepest longing?

All life desires to be life, *i.e.*, it will not have merely abstract existence, but wishes to *be* that which it feels itself to be, namely, life. This is the powerful fundamental impulse of all life, which makes its power known in a two-fold direction and activity, viz., attracting and repelling. The power of life attracts to itself all that whereby it feels itself strengthened, elevated, and promoted, and repels all that is restrictive and injurious to it. Life strives after complete development and unrestricted movement of itself; it desires to express wholly that which is within it, or to fill up entirely its ideal periphery from its centre. Torpidity, and stunted or wholly suppressed development, do not allow life to be life, and are painfully felt by it as evil. Here it is already shown that, as the foundation of all life-activity is to be apprehended as power, Christianity in its essence must equally be power, or it could not be, as it professes to be, something related and suited to life.

Everywhere, where life has its will, and moves unrestrictedly

in the sphere which it fills, it presents itself with the expression of agreeable feeling, and produces the impression of beauty. This is manifestly the case in the great whole of the life of nature. In nature is imperishable fulness and freshness of life. That which is stunted in it, appears not only as something singular, but also—and this is the main thing—in general only as something peripheric, which does not spring from a want of power in the heart of life, but from unfavourable conflicts and influences at its circumference; the life of nature is sound at core, and consequently inwardly guiltless of its sometimes exterior uncomeliness, as is sufficiently evident from the fact, that nature, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, can always produce and shape forth such a life as is possible under the given circumstances.

We must therefore call nature complete; she has all that which she must have[1] to be life-giving nature, and there is no reason for apprehension that she can ever lose this: nothing is wanting to her for which she must wait as for something coming from elsewhere, before she can succeed in shaping forth the whole glory of her life. So far as we have become acquainted with her, she appears rather as the realized idea of herself: she makes the strong and beneficial impression upon us, that all life possible to her has really become life; not the smallest material for the purposes of life has remained or remains unapplied. And as in space she makes her appearance as the all-animating, so in time she appears as the ever self-rejuvenating: in her whole action and essence she expresses the feeling of indestructibility of her life; her whole course has ever a resolute character, as if she knew that she had inexhaustible means and forces at command. What a wealth of restorative power does she manifest and bring into action, not merely in the great whole, but also in individual cases! What

[1] This is, of course, only relatively, not absolutely true. Nature also needs for its true glory a certain participation in the Redemption. Rom. viii. 19.

a variety of means of defence and offence does she set immediately in motion against all which threatens her! A healing activity from within toils immediately against all that wounds; the muscle fills out its injured dwelling with pearls, the mountains fill their fractures and clefts with veins of ore.

Hence, also, joy is the key-note of the concert of nature, because nature's life-impulse receives its full satisfaction. The creation exults in the power of its preserver.

And with human life, as it seems, the case is no otherwise; exultant feeling of power wells out from its breast, and its countenance beams with irrepressible serenity and freshness. The cheerful, animated picture of human life, with the infinite riches of its gifts, enjoyments, deeds, powers, tendencies, and forms—can it make other than a pleasing impression on the unprejudiced beholder? Does it bear in itself any other stamp than that of beauty and agreeable feeling, which is impressed on every perfect development, and therefore also testifies of such? And could the creative will have so formed life as to have forgotten the powers and capacities indispensable to its full development, which must then have been added afterwards, like the postscript to a letter? That is impossible. However, then, the relation of Christianity to life may be thought of, it certainly cannot be as that of a supplement to the creation; whatever Christianity may be to life, it cannot serve to supply an original deficiency thereof.

Apparently, rather, human life, like the life of nature, is so organized that all the capacities which exist in it desire to and can come to bloom; and it both has the favouring conditions in itself which awake and call forth the slumbering germs, and it has also the protective forces and means at its command, which are constantly engaged in guarding its variously threatened welfare. From what side could distress come upon life, to which it would not be able to send means to ward off and overcome, or to soften and alleviate it? On what stage of its unfolding could it not shape forth and procure for itself all

that which it must obtain, in order to show the perfection and satisfaction which are necessary at this stage? All its bodily and spiritual needs are like so many bills of exchange drawn by itself, which it never fails to honour, when they are presented at the right time and in the proper place. For the body are ever growing its covering and nourishment; wounds and sicknesses derive their healing balsam from afar; the senses meet everywhere that which serves for their exercise and delectation; for the fancy is everywhere a stimulating abundance of images; for the artistic impulse is everywhere afforded material for its use, and for the social instinct are commerce and society; over every dark sorrow hope arches its bright bow of peace; the heart finds everywhere its love, the mind its world of thoughts.

Like a richly dowried bride, adorned with unfading freshness of charms, does human life, apprehended as a great whole, present itself from its amiable side; and there is no dogma so evident and so generally popular, as that of the all-sufficiency of life for its complete dignity and happiness. It is the dogma of the world and her merry children.

Life certainly does, when regarded from the stand-point of its joyous feeling, appear exceeding excellent; and that which is elsewhere designated as highest and most difficult, the serene rest of the soul, which flows from the sacred heights of the Atonement, seems here close at hand, and attainable with but slight toil. It is attained when, in comparison with the great whole, we do not rate high the little knavery and misery in the world. And we shall do this the less, the more we feel ourselves moved, by intelligent consideration of the matter, to regard and tolerate misery as the necessary shading of the picture, but vileness as the inevitable outgrowth of the weak sensuous nature of man. We need therefore, only to disaccustom ourselves from complaining and bewailing, in order to feel ourselves immediately reconciled to the world and its adversities; for by the first we render ourselves intolerable to the world,

and by the second we render its adversities intolerable to ourselves.

But the Scripture says: 'Woe unto them who say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace' (Jer. vi. 14; 1 Thess. v. 3). Life discloses to attentive consideration an entirely different side from that of serene amiability.

When Bluebeard went to his wedding, he presented himself in the bewitching splendour of his knightly dignity, and the beauty whom he took home with him regarded her life at his lordly castle as the happiest on earth. But when, following the irresistible impulse of her heart, she entered the secret fateful closet, and saw the dismembered corpses on the wall mirrored in the bloody floor, and felt herself overpowered by the terrible certainty that she would soon meet with the same fate, then she sank down with terror, and the traitorous key slipt from her trembling hands.

A similar horror would indeed fall on many a one, if, in the midst of his joyous feeling of life, he were suddenly transported to its torture-chamber or charnel-house, which certainly does not always stand open before us, but is usually concealed and closed; and on this account its existence is never suspected nor discovered by so many, who, like the little birds in the air, twitter away their serene sensuous life in undisturbed composure.

Human life, on closer observation, manifests in not a few places a loathsomeness which excites a shudder. And this loathsomeness is by no means a fleeting distortion of its features by an unfortunate accident, but rather the state of its heart, which is ever breaking through all exterior varnish. Nature, instead of enhancing in human life, which stands on a higher stage, the grace and beauty which it displays on the stage of vegetable life, falls back, when it is left in its development purely to itself, into a depth which revolts all feeling of beauty, and shows itself entirely undisguised and unrefined. Human life has unquestionably the capacity and impulse to unfold and form not merely the animal, but also the higher, purely *human* character.

That, however, which human nature continually develops from itself first and most strongly without higher influence, is plainly not the human, but the animal; and since now, by a law of nature, a one-sided development is never without a destructive and deteriorating influence on the whole, as well as on the developed side itself, so the animal part of human life, which is to exist here together with a higher part, and to minister to it, does not sustain itself in its pure natural character, but, so long as it lacks the better half belonging to it, sinks below the animal form of development, and becomes *bestial*. Nothing is easier and more agreeable to the unawakened, uncultivated human life, than to be bestial, and to enjoy itself bestially.

Living proofs of the above are afforded by the primeval forests of Brazil, and the islands of the South Sea, in painfully oppressive verity.[2] What a contrast between the radiant tree-blooms of those forests and the grinning countenances and the figures of the Botokuds, set in tension only by greediness! And still more repulsive than in these, does purely uncultivated human nature present itself in many other savage nations. We need only allude to the New Hollanders passing their lives in stench and stupor, and compare the filthy holes they inhabit, with the nests, neatly tapestried with leaves, of those East Indian birds which are accustomed to bring in a glow-worm as their chandelier for the night. In the bodies of the New Zealanders and North American savages, the human form indeed affords an entirely different and even not rarely a highly satisfactory aspect; in the case of the former, as in that of the latter, they show finely formed bodies, animated by strength and graceful dexterity; but with the cultivation of this corporeal beauty, the revolting loathsomeness of their animal barbarousness has by no means disappeared, but appears, on the contrary, only the more glaring and wounding to the feelings. There we see the

[2] See the Journey to Brazil of Prince Maximilian von Neuwied. Frankfurt, a. M. 1820–21. On the New Zealanders, D'Urville's Voyage round the World.

tall hero-forms skulk about by night, to quench their raging appetite for human flesh by the first best human wild animal who comes within the range of their shot; here the whole tribe is collected to a delectable feast of blood, at which the war-captive bound to the stake is slowly tortured to death, and every one of his cries of pain is accompanied by a hellish yell of exultation.[3] We can well spare ourselves the sad inquiry from land to land after such bestial phenomena of life; we need not describe either the murder-madness with which the Malays are not rarely seized, nor the human slaughter which is never wanting at any feast of the Ashantees, nor the customs of the aborigines of Java,[4] who cut their decrepit parents to pieces, and feast on them in the forest, and devour their criminals alive, limb by limb, in full assembly,—in order to render more evident the prevalence of a horrifying trait in life; we will not, for the better attainment of this object, roam through the old German forests,[5] and see the fearful origin of the old adage, 'Duck under, the world bears thee a grudge.' We will not penetrate into the torture-chambers and castle-dungeons of the middle ages, nor tarry at the impalings and flayings of punitive justice in those times;[6] we will leave unread the innumerable accounts of the innumerable barbarities of Eastern despots, and turn away our eyes from the horrid pleasure with which they, by their own hands, decapitate and tear out the eyes of their victims, as, *e.g.*, the notorious Djezzar Pasha was accustomed to do at breakfast. The universal presence of a thoroughly bad side of human life is an indubitable fact, established long ago by history and experience, which we need not corroborate by accumulated examples. The life of nations which are intellectually superior,

[3] See Ross *Cox*. The Columbia River. London, 1831.

[4] See *Anderson*, Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra. Edinburgh, 1826.

[5] On the cruelties of the ancient Saxons, See *Mone*, Geschichte des Heidenth. etc., 2. p. 58.

[6] *E.g.*, the horrible execution of Grumbach and Brück in 1567. *Menzel*, neuere Gesch. d. Deutsch. 4. p. 353, sq.

is not free from this vileness: they only know better how to conceal it; and it is just this life which affords the clearest and strongest evidence of its universal presence, and of its firm and deep intergrowth with the whole history of human development, since it cannot be denied that it has not only not disappeared with the increasing intelligence and refinement, but, on the contrary, is only too frequently more abominable and revolting than before. He who would convince himself of this, need only take up the Biographies of Roman Emperors and Empresses,[7] or the French memoirs of the last centuries,[8] or bestow some attention on the descriptions of life in the principal cities of Europe and America. He who would convince himself that the intellectually enlightened Europeans know how to surpass the North American savages in refined barbarity, may peruse the history of the cruelties which the rich planters of the East and West Indies allowed, even in the last century, to be inflicted on their slaves and on the natives, or place before him the acts, not long since made known, of the Spaniards in South America during three hundred years; he who would become acquainted with bestiality at its acme among a people who boast not unjustly of the highest intelligence and the most refined manner of living, may reproduce for himself the bloody scenes of the French revolution: not those slaughtering bands of the September days, and the rabble-rout which bit and tore in pieces the heart of the Princess Lamballe, give the true idea of it, but those respectable gentlemen and ladies who found their highest pleasure in the most abominable sensualities and deeds of murder, and, together with this, sought always to display their mental cultivation in the most splendid manner in public and social life; and to him who would persuade himself or another, that the dreadful height to which barbarousness then rose in France had its ground merely in passions heated to the utmost degree, father-confessors, physicians, and judges may clearly demonstrate that revolting

[7] Suet. Tib. 43. Cal. 32. Ner. 33. Dom. 10. etc.

[8] *E.g.*, the Memoirs of *Tilly* and *St Simon*.

inhumanity is only too frequently compatible with the most cultivated understanding and the most uniform tranquillity of mind —not merely in the rude souls of men, but also in the tender hearts of women, as we see in the court-ladies of Louis XV., present in their richest ornaments at the tearing to pieces of the unfortunate Damiens, and pitying only the noble horses, because they could not accomplish their horrible business without the greatest exertions,—as not less in the case of that Hungarian lady of high rank, who, for the preservation of her beautiful skin, washed herself in the blood of young maidens murdered by her own hand,[9] etc., etc. No tongue, no pen, is in a condition to count up and fully adduce the traits of the horrible cannibalism in human life; and it is, as already mentioned, a fortunate circumstance that so very few of them are witnessed, and by so very few persons, and that, as it happens, either a levity, which quickly forgets what is terrible, or a certain apathy, which envelopes the soul as in a case, weakens the force of the horrible impression, which would crush a tender sensibility if it came upon it in its full strength.

Well-disposed friends of humanity, and passionate admirers of faith in the perfection of life, will now, perhaps, think that nothing is easier than to invalidate the force of these intimations, and to save the threatened honour and reputation of life. That, for this purpose, all that is necessary is to oppose to these detestable traits as many, or still more, beautiful and noble traits; and to bring together, in a short time, a long gallery of such from all lands and nations, is not attended with the smallest difficulty.

Such a beginning would testify, at all events, to the goodness of their hearts, though not to that of their understandings. For, by a rejoinder of this sort, they would prove nothing at all, except that they have not understood what we have really been speaking of, and what is the main point at issue. The

[9] *Schubert*, History of the Human Soul, 2. p. 507. Cf. *Wagner*, Beiträge z. philos. Anthrop. 2. p. 268.

existence of a beautiful attractive side of human life has been so little denied, that it has rather been designated as its main façade, which, for the most part, comes first into view. But whether life has only this one and no other side, whether it is throughout so excellent as it appears when seen from a certain elevation, and whether its development is of itself in every respect so perfectly satisfactory as to leave nothing further to be desired—this is the main point at issue; and who would venture, in the face of facts like the above, to affirm boldly all this? What, then, will the well-disposed and merry people do with their collection of examples of noble deeds and sentiments? Do they wish to prove thereby, that not merely evil, but also good, exists and takes place in abundance on the earth? But no one doubts this, and therefore it does not need to be proved. Life has and displays humanity; of this there is no question; but whence and by what means has it this? This must come into question and examination. Is humanity a purely natural product of human life? Does human life really, in its purely natural condition, surpass the graceful vegetable world in lovely beauty, as should properly be the case, since human life is a higher form of nature than the vegetable world? Does humanity, since it must be considered as the character of the race, arrive at complete development, not merely in single places and expressions, but everywhere in the whole life, so unrestrictedly and without stunting, as in brute-life savageness unfolds itself as the character of the beasts of prey, and mildness as that of the lamb? Is the bestiality in human life, which undeniably exists together with the humanity, something just as much desired by God, as, without doubt, the humanity is? Can we say that the thirst for blood belongs as essentially and indispensably to the whole of human life as to the nature of the lion and tiger? And would humanity accordingly cease to be humanity, if it lost this blood-thirst, as certainly as the tiger and lion, without it, would not be tiger and lion? Are the innumerable blood-stains, which life every-

where bears on it, to be regarded as nothing more than freckles on single places of epidermis, which are of no account or consequence in the well-pleasing sight which the whole affords? Has the whole inner process of life always and throughout a normal course? Are there nowhere diseased parts? Do interruptions and stoppages nowhere occur? Does the inner organism of life know no exuberant fulness on the one hand, which is necessarily connected with an increasing disease on the other?—these are the questions which, at the point in the examination we have now arrived at, are present as the most decisive; and that these questions must be answered altogether in the negative, cannot possibly appear doubtful to one who fully weighs them.

As certainly as the life of nature is really that which it wishes and ought to be, so certainly is human life not in its purely natural stage of development; as certainly as the former has attained its conception of vegetable and animal life unconstrained in joyous development, and perfectly fills out its sphere, so certainly does the latter either remain far behind its conception of true human life, or approaches it only gradually with toil and effort, and, in general, only half fills its sphere with genuine contents; as certainly as there the beautiful and perfect of its kind appears in the great whole and in all its parts, so certainly does it here appear only sporadically; as certainly as the former is sound and uncorrupted at heart, so certainly is the latter sick and weak at core, since it leaves precisely its essential form and side in part entirely undeveloped, in part only scantily unfolded, so that it is far outweighed by the sensuous animal side in inward strength and outward respectability; and as certainly as the living God will and can create only life, so certainly He cannot be charged with the vicious deadness[10] into which the higher tendencies and noble powers of human life, estranged from God, have sunk. And how deep this degradation, how great the power of this mis-

[10] Cf. Rep. 2. 379. c. 10, 617. e. [ii. pp. 60, 308].

chief, thus become native to human life, must be, is seen plainly enough in the ill-success of so many and persevering endeavours to ameliorate and elevate life. Have not thousands of philanthropic, political, intellectual, and moral lever-forces been toiling for thousands of years in the elevation of life to its true dignity? And in what proportion does the success stand to their unresting activity?

He who would render evident by a single example the contrast between the joyfully full development of the beautiful in the life of nature, and its scanty and sullen development in the higher human life, needs only compare a blossoming tree in its splendour with man's performance of duty. In the former, what a wealth of beauteous pictures! in the latter, what poverty! There, what struggling, thronging, welling forth of countless buds on all sides; here, what a few meagre and unwilling exercises of virtue forced from inward disinclination! how many instances of half and entire neglect or infraction of duty! That which in human life displays itself in such cheerful freshness and fulness of sap, like the trees in spring, is not the moral but the sensuous animal part of its nature. But now it cannot be for a moment doubted that the morally beautiful could and should bloom forth in human life with just as joyful unrestrained fulness as the impulse towards the light in trees; for the moral powers and capacities could not be originally worse and less capable than the sensuous: if, therefore, they are now, as appearance teaches us, more faded or faint-hearted than these, this must be considered not as an evil created by God, but as one which has arisen without His fault.

If now the essential difference between the two great territories of life, which we call nature-history and world-history, is to be set forth more definitely; if the original capacity of world-history, for a glory and significance far surpassing that of nature-history, is to appear more plainly than hitherto, and its sad coming short of this to be clearly perceived as so much

the more deplorable,—we need only take more closely into view that principle of human life which causes us to perceive most unmistakeably its capability for higher dignity and importance. This is the consciousness. In consciousness, the life of nature blooms up to true human life; by the consciousness of itself, individuality raises itself to personality: the personal consciousness gives to the existence of the individual man an essentially different meaning from that of the individual existence of the brute, viz., a meaning in and of itself, besides a general significance for the whole. Man, as a conscious being, is to be and to pass for something as an individual; not so the brute: the brute is not to exist of itself, but in and for the whole; its individual existence is fully resigned and subordinated to the ends of nature and its species, and it has no other will, and no other determination than to serve these ends. For this service, indeed, nature takes possession of and claims a part of human existence, but only a part: consciousness, in its highest development, is not its slave, but only its freedman; and this freedom is so inalienable a property of the consciousness, that it always ascends into it again, however much the man may exert himself to cast himself together with it back into the depths of merely physical existence: the motions of the conscience are nothing but the indestructible witnesses of the ever-returning ascendancy of the spiritual over the sensuous and natural.

From the fact now, that man enters with and by his personal consciousness into a sphere in which every individual is to count and pass for *one*, and is to serve not merely the purposes which he finds before him, but also to choose and set objects before himself, when we speak of evil in human life, the case is manifestly quite otherwise than when evil in natural life is discussed. For here are present entirely different conceptions of value and perfection; here appear entirely different relations and requirements, here quite different principles and measures come into application. It cannot be said, the earth has very many waste places, in which nature has developed no germs,

called forth no life; consequently, we may content ourselves with a similar condition of things in human life. It cannot be said, in the world of brutes, we perceive the existence of blood-suckers and beasts of prey to be necessary and indispensable; why, then, do we find their occurrence in human life so thoroughly inadmissible and intolerable? It cannot be said, the life of nature is often and variously pierced and punished by terrible pains; and what this is compelled to suffer, to that must human life also patiently submit;—for in nature the life of the species merely is desired, but in human life particularly the individual personal life. In the former, therefore, the lack of individuals matters little, but in the latter very much. It is in reference to the whole that nature forms beasts of prey, and unhesitatingly delivers over individuals to individuals. That, however, which cruelty in human life injures and destroys, is not impersonal but personal existence; and, if destruction is to be allowed *here*, it must accordingly be able to appeal to something quite other and higher than physical aims and brutish impulses; and all pain in the life of nature is not only circumscribed as to time and space, seldom proceeding beyond the circle and duration of its development, but it also remains ever involved in a certain insensibility, which renders it tolerable with but little effort. But in human life, consciousness gives it a fearful sharpness, and leads it over, often with unalleviated severity, from the present into the distant future, from the life-circles first touched, to all those connected with them. When a brute dies, all his fellow-creatures who are fresh in life enjoy their existence in undisturbed composure, but a tormented man not seldom draws thousands of his fellow-men into the feeling of his torment.

When Louis XVI. wished to speak to his people from the scaffold, his judges caused his voice to be drowned by the beating of drums. Their interests required that they should not allow the voice of innocence and truth to penetrate the hearts of the people. So there is an equally powerful and widely spread disposition in life, the great object of which is to

retain life in the good faith of its excellence and all-sufficiency. If, therefore, any voice or event will urgently admonish life to the recognition of its need and shame, this disposition is immediately busy in weakening the strength of this admonishing call, and preventing as much as possible the awaking of life from the flattering dreams of its undiminished glory. It exerts itself to the utmost for this end, and shuns not to use the boldest falsehood, if this only promises to ward off securely the entrance of the hated truth. And rather than admit that life has sunk deep, and hence needs elevation, and that its most vital parts are suffering from a disease which renders healing necessary, when it can no longer veil the disturbed condition of that side of life organized for a higher development, it denies entirely to life its calling to freedom and humanity, and maintains that it was intended for no other existence and blessedness at all than the sensuous and natural; and this merely in order to prevent the painful feeling of shame from coming into the mind, because it well knows that the life of this is its death.

But in vain! Life does not itself believe in the blameless excellence of its natural character; it feels clearly that it is not what it could and might be. Whatever the carnal sense may sing or say before it of its incomparable worth, it does not become free from its unrest, and longing for a better fame. In the midst of the joy which beams on its countenance, there often moves an obscure pain in its loudest jubilee, not rarely mingles a low but heart-rending cry of grief. This comes from the inmost depths, from a sorrow which has no joy. Life hears it with dissatisfaction and shuddering, and yet with secret proscribed desire for it. It reflects on it, calls it forth, introduces it into its most favourite melodies, connects with it its deepest earnestness; and when this plaintive cry has once entered the soul of a man, for him it will never die away: he will never be free from its dissonant mingling in all the jubilee of life; he will never find again the disturbed serenity and ease of his existence, until he has found that after which the voice complain-

ingly cries. It is the voice of a noble prisoner, who sighs for freedom, towards which his thought sleeps not day nor night: I am more than a mere ripple of the blood, more than a fleeting tension of the nerves; I am a being created for life and endeavour,—a power intended for independent existence; but I am a squandered, mis-used inheritance, a poor bound tenant,—'for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.'—'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' (Rom. vii. 18, 24).

Not merely its evil does life deeply feel and loudly confess; it feels this evil also to be its *guilt!* As this is ever recurring to its consciousness as *its* guilt, however strenuously and repeatedly it may strive to roll off the tormenting burden, this is, of course, far more painful than the feeling of the evil itself from which it suffers.

We need not enter into an extended refutation of the well-known theory of excuse, which is still, from desks and pulpits, alas! proposed to life for its sweet consolation. What can poor man do, cries this theory, for his sinfulness? He has not created himself. He has not made the critical composition of his being from heavenly spirit and earthly dust, he has not placed in his sensuous nature the violent impulses which overpower the mind! Yet, apparently, the development of sensuality which advances before the spiritual development, and the strength of it which is necessary for the earthly end of life, is the mother of all passions and sins.

Life is much too wise, and holds itself too dear, to assent entirely without hesitation to this view, which removes the guilt from it, and rolls it on the Creator; for it is quite clear that life must renounce healing and salvation entirely, so soon as the proposition is established and universally believed in, that it has not deserved its sentence. On this very feeling of guilt depends the single hope and possibility of its recovery; for if life feels itself guilty, it also feels itself capable of being otherwise than it is. But if it incurs no guilt by its evil character, it has also no

virtue and no future; for then sin is not something which has arisen from *its* nature, and is done *by itself*, and consequently superable, but something done *to* it against its will, therefore insuperable, and connected with it by iron necessity. Then a redemption from sin is possible only by death or transformation; and a separation of sin from life, in either of these two ways, could not with any propriety be called a redemption.

Yet life has long since, by the fact, refuted the God-accusing assertion, that it is not guilty of its criminality. Long since has life factually demonstrated, that it neither despairs of salvation nor believes in the truth of that excuse. It by no means resigns itself with shoulder-shruggings to the natural weakness of its higher principle, as to an unalterable fate: it is rather continually looking about for help; and as soon as it obtains this, conducts the factual proof of the powerful and joyous rule of the spirit over the flesh, in single forms and characters.

But let not *single* presentations of its spiritual glory satisfy it. It must see the *masses* seized, moved, and penetrated by the spirit, because it is only by the powerful propagation of its impulses that it is and is called life: the heart-beat must set the whole of the blood in motion; every organ must feel itself excited to co-operation by the activity of the others; there must be an uninterrupted connection between all the powers and activities of the organism, a continual playing into one another of the life-forces, if the bodily life is to be a true and sound life. As in the life of the body, so in the human life on earth. Force is to awaken force; the places forced into true and full life are not to be oases in sandy deserts and steppes, but to spread abroad on every side. Between all the scattered points of light an inner life-communion is to be established; the highest and most inward animation is to extend its waves in ever wider and wider circles over the whole earth: for as the race of man, quite differently from the races of plants and animals, which are circumscribed to countries and zones, is spread over the whole earth, so also everywhere, where men are, is true human life to be or become.

This is what history should be, or rather *is;* it is, in its essence, human life becoming, and is thereby essentially different from natural history: for the life in this is one concluded within itself, and that which predominates in the contemplation of it is space; in the former, on the other hand, it has a relation to the infinite, and presents itself especially as connected with time;—the former is shaped from effects, the latter produces itself from acts. The deed is the source and characteristic trait of world-history. Natural history has no deeds, only events; for the same reason, it knows nothing of guilt, without, however, possessing this guiltlessness as innocence.

Here, then, where the sense and meaning of history are disclosed, do the predominant inclinations and strivings of life also first become perfectly clear, and appear in their intimate relation to each other, and to the fundamental striving of the whole. Life feels its debt, and desires to pay it: hence its never-resting haste to fill out all its parts; hence its discontent with the ever-rising feeling of vacuity; hence its meditation and thinking of works of satisfaction and expiation; hence the intense earnestness of its guilt-offerings, punishments, penances, and self-tortures; hence the harshness and severity of its monastic vows and priestly regulations; hence the number and variety of its sacred customs, its dedications and purifications, its prayers and mysteries. Life has a presentiment of the distance between its reality and its idea, and perceives it ever the more clearly the more its consciousness is developed: hence its constant fluctuation between the lofty and the low; hence the innumerable contradictions which everywhere break out from its inward disunion; hence its striving after consciousness and after stupefaction, its urgency to grasp itself and to be free from itself, its impulse towards collection and also dispersion, its inclination for quiet and for a throng; hence its reaching about for firm points of support, its desire for powerful attractions, excitements, and elevations; hence its everlasting sorrow and eternal complaint of the dreamlike nothingness of its perishable glory

and toil;[11] hence its unquieted longing for pure and lasting happiness; hence its childish desire for wonders, legends, and tales, in which, as in a mirror, it beholds itself satisfied and perfected. Life becomes aware that it has a history whose fundamental trait is its suffering, whose contents are its deeds, whose goal is its complete development and formation: hence its joy in action, in fight, and power, and victory, its foreboding love for heroes, knights, and rescuers; hence its pleasure in poetry, which in epics and tragedy glorifies its deeds and suffering; hence its inclination to lyric flights, and to faith in seers, oracles, and signs; hence its thoroughgoing propensity to wait and to hope, its susceptibility to total impressions and movements, its instantaneous readiness to form a circle around points or individualities which promise much or radiate a powerful influence.

And thus, then, life allows it to be perceived with sufficient plainness; for what it most profoundly longs, and what it feels to be its most urgent need, it desires the removal of its pressure of guilt and its weakness, it desires a full sense of its power and dignity. If now we have apprehended this feeling of debt, and this weakness as its evil, that which produces its full sense must present itself to us in the conception of salvation, which, consequently, regarded merely from the biological point of view, shows the two chief things desired,—the negative, liberation from all that is destructive and stunting; and the positive, fulness of ability and freshness.

Whencesoever, also, the salvation of life may come, it is clear, without further discussion, from the preceding, that it is not really salvation, if it does not really take away the guilt, if, therefore, it comes into life as only an image or thought, not as deed and truth; if, further, it does not penetrate into the consciousness and innermost depths; if it does not extend itself through the whole, but holds itself within a separate circle; if it does

[11] Eccles. ii. 17, iv. 1, v. 15, vi. 5, etc.

not have or produce joyous freshness of life; if, in fine, it does not operate towards the perfect formation of life to its highest ends.

We ask now: Whence is such salvation and help to accrue to life? Who is to be the saviour of life?

Nature is to be the saviour. For 'when the wanderer over land and sea, or the historical inquirer, pursues through all countries the uniform comfortless picture of the disunited race, he gladly lowers his gaze to the still life of plants, and to the inner working of the sacred power of nature; or, yielding to the hereditary impulse which for thousands of years has glowed in the human breast, he gazes, full of presentiments, upwards to the constellations, which, in undisturbed harmony, complete their ancient everlasting course!' Yes, mother nature has healing balsam for the wounded heart of man; and can faithful adherence to her changeless fidelity and regularity do otherwise than redound to the true welfare of life? Has not all the evil of human life arisen from its breaking loose from nature, from its forgetting her aims and laws, from its deviation from her order and simplicity? Back, therefore, to nature!—and life has its needed assistance.

But Nature cannot be a Saviour.

For from her lower sphere cannot come that which life needs for its full development in a higher sphere. That cannot grow on the soil of her blind necessity, which is lacking to the awakened free consciousness for its welfare and peace: and the peace, which her splendour of flowers and stars causes to flow into the soul in some hours and moods, demands, on the one hand, in order to be felt, the previous existence of that higher and nobler principle, for whose genial cultivation this helpful power is sought; on the other hand, that peace which is built entirely on wavering feeling, changes only too frequently and easily into a fearful horror, when the dark death-dominion of nature yawns before man like an inappeasable cholera-grave, and the æsthetically contemplated arch of heaven presents itself to the cold

conception as that which it really is,—an immeasurable abyss of stars, in which the earth, with all its anguish and raptures, runs its course as an insignificant atom.

But if Nature cannot be a saviour, Art can be one. Its very name and etymology indicate that its fundamental idea is that of ability. It complements and perfects the inability of nature and life, and presents—what these are not in a condition to produce—the perfectly beautiful. Life enjoys its perfect configuration in art. Does it not remove all restrictions, and raise to full significance all that should be significant, but cannot be so on account of unfavourable influences? Does it not, therefore, bring the idea to unstunted existence, to beautiful reality? Does it not, therefore, procure for life that after which it longs, —its conformity to its idea? Certainly every true work of art cannot operate otherwise than satisfying and reconciling, for it lifts the view out of its empirical narrowness, and procures for it the delightful contemplation of something whole, free, completed, and perfect of its kind. And thus, then, art has peculiarly the duties of a saviour and the powers of a redeemer.

But yet Art cannot be a saviour.

That it cannot thoroughly remove the evil of life, but only cause it to be for a moment forgotten, is evident enough from its natural and necessary disinclination thereto. From reality as such, it is not indeed in general abstracted, but from real evil and grief it is. It is only concerned with this, in so far as a portion, however small, of the ideal and pleasing is found therein; it decidedly refuses all that is purely unrefreshing. And it must do so, for its conscious entrance thereupon would be its death and destruction. Tears of care and grief extinguish all the artistic fire of inspiration, and art is powerless before bare blank misery. It is indebted chiefly to the flight of fancy for the attainment of its high aims. But life wants more than mere pieces of fancy: fancy cannot help it from its *real* need, because fancy, at its highest point, only assists it to lose sight of it.

Here now Philosophy comes forward and offers herself, as she did in antiquity and does also in our times, for the important service of saviour to life. (Cf. above, p. 144 sq.)

We will leave undecided awhile the trial of her capacity for this, but cannot withhold the preliminary remark, that she would not seem likely, on account of her abstract scientific character, to suit the ever *concrete* life, and to operate *immediately* thereupon.

Yes, say the friends of human welfare, philosophy is only for the learned, not for the people: therefore she cannot be the saviour. But *culture* can be so. *Civilisation* adapts herself thereto, for she is the common good of all: she is a cosmopolitan by birth, she belongs immediately to life; its blood flows in her veins, its experiences ripen in her head, its language sounds from her lips, and she enters into all its relations, cares for the representation and satisfaction of all interests, both material and spiritual. In her the head and heart, which else go in different directions, toil and work together; she removes the disunion between theory and practice, and unites the two in a peaceful and advantageous alliance. And if nature is not impotent, art not wanting in powerful influence, and science not without high dignity—how much deeper must the significance of civilisation be for life, how much more powerful and blessed her influence, since she bears within herself unmistakeably the nutritive material for all these, and entertains life with the extract of all the great, beautiful, and excellent which she becomes acquainted with in art, nature, and science.

In fact, scarcely any promise of prosperity inspires life with so much confidence as that of civilisation. This confidence has also undeniably sent out its roots, especially in our times, deeply and widely in the old as in the new world; and the voices, which announce with enthusiasm the speedy conquest of civilisation over all the antiquated religions of the earth, become ever louder and more general. Have we not already in our days seen a church formed by zeal for the civilisation

of the world, and its apostles make no inconsiderable conversions!

But yet civilisation cannot be the saviour,—for the simple reason, that with her increase is also generally connected the increase of evil, since she renders not merely the understanding and talents of men, but also their passions, more clever and cunning, and of *simple* impulses makes satiated ones, of a robust nature an adorned and enfeebled one, and of contented dispositions pretentious ones, which are acquainted with and accustomed to pleasures of every kind. *Refined* extravagances and cruelties do not occur in uncivilised life; as we have already remarked above, the most horrible crimes have their seat in the abodes of the finest civilisation.

How could civilisation be the saviour? ask the reverers of morality. She has too much to do with the material, she steers her course too exclusively towards earthly happiness, instead of towards the highest goal of life; she restricts her polishing too much to the external; she penetrates far too little into the depths, where evil has its real source and origin. This is nowhere else than in immorality. Immorality is the mother of all evil: the less immorality, the less evil in the world; the more virtue, the more perfection, nobility, and dignity of life. Life is saved, when moral principles are universally current and dominant. That which labours unceasingly that this may take place, is morality. Morality, therefore, is to be, and will be, the saviour.

But yet Morality cannot be the saviour.

For it is in essence not properly a *growth*, but rather a law of life! It stands in fresh, green life only like a dry branch, hung with clattering categorical imperatives, which, indeed, frighten many a sparrow away from the wheat, but do not cause any wheat to spring. The external accordance of performance with command, morality can indeed produce, but not the internal; it can demand obedience, but cannot effect it in the heart. Not he that does right, but he that loves, is a righteous

man; and this love morality can indeed beautifully describe, but never produce, because it is not letter but spirit, and arises not in the *commanded*, but in the *free* will.

And if for these reasons morality cannot be a saviour, the state police can still less be so. It may keep life in external propriety and order, but it cannot internally redeem it from evil and sin.

Whence, from what side, then, is salvation for life to come, if from all these sides it cannot possibly come?

Let us turn once more to its evil, if perchance we may learn from the character and tendency of this from whence its help must come. Let us look more closely, which side of life is seen to be most full of suffering and evil. Manifestly the side which lies towards heaven,—*the religious side.* This is so thoroughly evil, that it has been declared by many wise men utterly incurable. Yea, since evil has here spread so extraordinarily, and has so taken possession of the whole territory, even sharp-sighted inquirers have been no longer able to distinguish this from that; and, regarding religion as itself evil, have in all earnestness proposed its complete extirpation, believing that in no other manner can life be restored to health and happiness.

It cannot be denied that on no side is help afforded to life with so much difficulty as on this. None remains, in spite of all ameliorating influences, usually so obstinately bad as this; either it persists in cold immobility or complete deadness, or in feverish ebullitions begets the most contrary forms. And this, again, shows that no side of life is more in need of salvation than the religious. But this side lies manifestly not towards the world, but towards *that* side, on which prayer seeks for God. Therefore, also, its salvation cannot have its origin from the world, and purely *from this side*, but must come rather from *that* side, from *beyond*—from God.

Yes, the living love of God is announced as alone saving,—there is nothing else. For it stirs in life, now gently, now more

powerfully, something which ever longs for God, and 'which God Himself, who can do all things, can still only by His love;' and like as the hart panteth for fresh water, so crieth the soul of mortal man after the living God (Ps. xlii. 2).

Let us now, after these results, look back into the history of humanity.

We see in it a bright distinguished life-picture, which extends not only its brightness, but chiefly also its animating and transforming influence, around it ever more widely. And this phenomenon of life does not appear disjoined from the rest of life, or contrasted with it, as if violently joined to it; but it presents itself rather as intimately and peculiarly belonging to the life of humanity, and even in a certain respect an organic product of it.

This is the life of Christ.

A fresher, fuller life, the history of the world does not furnish, and also none more beautiful and pure. Here no feeling of sin tarnishes the mirror of the ever clear consciousness; no impure thought, no evil deed, disturbs the inward peace. Here activity has nothing irksome, half or feebly done, about it; here no goodwill sighs over uncompleted works; here no important moment waits in vain for its full contents; here is rather pure fulness, connection, truth, dignity, earnestness, and joy; here is a fully coined being and activity, a life throughout true to and filling out its idea.

It is certain no life shows greater fulness of deeds, more decided devotion to a great and holy purpose, than this life of Christ. But yet the truly significant and incomparable element in it lies properly not in his action and conduct itself, but rather in the origin of this action and conduct. It is the most important and significant point in it, that this greatness of deeds springs neither from strong sensuous impulses, nor from single purposes, and daily repeated moral self-compulsions, but has, on the one hand, an as organic, as, on the other, really spiritual and human character and origin, coming wholly as

freshly and unconstrainedly from within, as leaves and fruit from a tree, and yet, again, belonging as thoroughly only to the consciousness and the will. In short, *freedom* is the source of this life; and hereby it is essentially distinct from other human life, which never shapes itself forth entirely from the depths of personality and freedom, but owes the bearing of its actions often more than half either to the inward compulsion, or to the interweaving and influence of external circumstances.

If now we ask, whence does the life of Christ obtain this freedom and permanence within it, such as no other human life possesses, it is clear at once that we must seek the answer to this question first on that side of life which stands or should stand in the most intimate relation to God.

As we saw this side which strives towards God only scantily developed in common life, here, in the life of Christ, we see it developed most perfectly. Are the consciousness and will in the former seen to be severed from God, and only locally and momentarily elevated to Him? Here we shall perceive an uninterrupted connection with God, a continued subjection to Him in free desire and love; and as we cannot but see that there life, in the degree that its godlessness increases, falls to the lower darker powers of the earth, so the constant in-dwelling of God in the life of Christ, it must be evident to us, is the principle which preserves and conditions its freedom. The two conceptions of the Divine in-dwelling and freedom are, moreover, separate from each other only in the succession of our thought; the things which they comprehend in themselves are not separate in the life of Jesus, but unceasingly with, through, and for each other. Here the Divine in-dwelling is ever at the same time also free, and freedom ever at the same time Divine in-dwelling; for neither of the two would be what it is without the other. In this living union of freedom and Divine in-dwelling, the life of Christ presents itself as the brightest and soundest on earth, as that human life which is pure, full, normal, and entirely correspondent to its idea.

And that which it *is*, it also *produces*. Itself free from evil within, it operates also on the heart of life to free it from evil. It communicates its power and freshness, it radiates its character in and over history.

The continuous, uninterrupted influence of Jesus' life on earth may be apprehended and traced especially in two directions,—in that outwards and extensively, and in that inwards and intensively: in the former, it is the great whole of humanity; in the latter, single human souls, which its working has for its aim and object.

From the mobile mass of the people which flowed at one time together around Jesus, and at another again apart from Him, there come forward chosen friends, His faithful followers, who form a narrow confidential circle about him. This circle is not broken up on the death of Jesus and His departure from the earth; on the contrary, it becomes closer and firmer, it grows and widens. From all sides, even from heathenism, are added to the communion of the disciples such as wish to belong to Christ. Everywhere are formed Christian fellowships: the same love, the same enthusiasm, draws closely together both the single members in every place, and also the different societies in different places. They know of each other, they take part with each other, they rejoice in each other, they care for each other; they feel themselves one in Christ Jesus their Lord, and through Him they feel themselves to be a community separate from the world. And so, through all the centuries of history, is manifested an increasing progress in this pious reunion over all the countries of the earth, a bringing together from all sides of greater or smaller masses of men into communion with Christ. No movement in universal history has expressed itself from the beginning so decidedly and energetically as desiring to penetrate the whole life of man, as that which proceeded from the life and death of Jesus (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i. 8); it resembles the circles which a stone thrown into the glassy waters forms all around it, in undulations even to the farthest shore.

The historical *ex*tensiveness of this influence has its ground in its *in*tensive character and strength. That operation of the Lord which penetrates to the heart of man, consists essentially, as previously intimated, in the growing conformation and transformation of the whole life into likeness to Christ. This is seen very manifestly in Jesus' disciples. Those timid Galileans, with their confused, undeveloped minds—how heroic, how victorious over the world and death, how intellectually clear and great, do they become by their faithful adherence to Christ! They testify of Him more even by their existence and character than by their words. It is *His* being which fills and animates theirs. As He is aware of the life of God in Him (John v. 26), so are they aware of His life in themselves; they express their deepest and truest self-consciousness, when they say, Christ lives in us (Gal. ii. 20). And yet it is properly *they* who now live. Far from having forfeited their personality by their inward devotedness to the Lord, they have thus first truly gained it. Their inmost soul has only most truly become their own, since it has become thoroughly the Lord's; for by this it is secured from being mingled with external life, and attains to a conscious and permanent unity and firmness. Their love to the Lord is the source of their power and freshness; and the life with this love is a life with God and in freedom. They know now no more of the power of death and the misery of sin; now those who before sighed over the non-achievement of the good, give thanks for their deliverance from the body of this death, and are able to do all things through Him who is mighty within them (Rom. vii. 25; Phil. iv. 13). Enough! the longer Christ works in them, the more do they possess of His freedom and nearness to God; and, generally, in every one who allows Christ to work upon and within him. There occurs a re-animation, yea, a new creation in him who is turned to Christ, and so remains. The penetrating beam of light from Jesus' holy life, awakes and separates. It awakes the properly essential in the soul; the soul comprehends herself, and reflects upon her profoundest

desire. It separates the higher from the lower, the permanent from the mutable. All the elements of light in the life of the soul feel themselves attracted and bound by this animating light from Christ, and with the illumination of the inmost soul begins the first day of the new life. In Christ, the soul feels the love of God: the love of God is no longer for her an abstract thought, but her concrete living possession; and the actual certainty of this possession is the sunshine of the inner world. Sin is indeed not yet fully killed, but its power is broken, it is cast out from the inmost soul. Christ has wooed and won a point in that inmost soul which belongs to Him, which He fills, and which therefore suffers not sin within it and about it; and from hence, from the growing strength of the Christ-life within us, is the dominion of sin ever more powerfully suppressed and vanquished.

Thus does the life of Christ affect those susceptible souls who enter its line of direction, and join the ranks of those who are collected about it and are connected with it. Each in these ranks is continually at the same time receiving and giving; roused and filled by the Lord, he rouses others, and communicates to them the fulness of his inner life; but still ever only, like John, pointing and leading to Him who baptizes with fire and the Holy Ghost. The living stream of Christ's love, which, springing from God, continually pours itself into the life of man, finds and forms everywhere a living connection of souls which draw from it and lead it on.

And here also it cannot long remain concealed from us, that the working of Jesus' love and life, which we have regarded separately and as distinct from each other, the one proceeding outwards and the other inwards, are thoroughly like each other, and by no means essentially different. That which occurs in the soul, when the Christian life is formed, is fundamentally entirely the same as that which takes place in the world, on the spread of Christianity in it. In the former as in the latter, the moving principle proceeds from a central point, which bears

within it eternal life; in the former as in the latter, the movement begins with a process of separation of the friends of Jesus from the world, of those parts of the soul which are affected towards Christ from carnality and sensuousness; in the former as in the latter, the penetrating beam of light brings with it a casting down of those masses which are unwilling or unable to enter the higher connection aimed at; in the former as in the latter, the disciples of the Lord will not remain restricted to the *narrowest space*, and serve the law of sin, but rather spread themselves on all sides over the whole field, and give God alone the glory; in the former as in the latter, there must accordingly be a continual struggle against all opposing elements and forces; in the former as in the latter, the continued or ever-renewed life-communion with God is the alone condition and source of all true strength, victorious joy, and godliness. And now we first rightly understand why Christ designates that which He desires in the world, and in the soul, by the same word, and uses the conception of the kingdom of God, now in a physical, now in a historical sense.[12]

The kingdom of God comprehends, accordingly, the whole life, the inward as the outward. It excludes all evil and misery of sin, wherever it comes, and includes the fulness of life and godliness; for it consists essentially in the powerful presence of the Lord and His love, which, wherever it is, produces His life, His freedom, and His peace.

And here, then, we have arrived at that point which our inquiry into the nature of the Christian element took into view at the very commencement as the decisive one. We have now, namely, perceived clearly, not in poetry, dream, or thought merely, but from life, from facts, and from historical reality, both what human life has most need of, and also that, by the life of Christ, he obtains a more perfect satisfaction than from any other source. Salvation, we saw, is life's most pressing

[12] Matt. xix. 23, 24, xiii. 24, 38; Luke xvii. 20, 21.

necessity, and salvation in the truest and most comprehensive sense of the word—shelter and protection from all that is bad, from sin, death, and hell, strength and help for all that is good, for faith, love, and hope; and this from *above*, from the Father of light, who is Love, and who wills not that any should be lost, but that all who believe in His Son should have eternal life,—this is the blessed gift of the Redeemer.

If, accordingly, we understand Christianity—that is, the historical life-form, whose kernel, contents, and soul is the life of Christ, as the heavenly saving power in the earthly life of man—we have at the same time also apprehended and found the idea of the Christian element.

The Christian element is that which has power to save.

To the correctness of this rendering of the conception, the Scriptures and Biblical theology furnish the most valid testimony.

If we open the Scriptures, we are everywhere met by a surprising multitude of such passages which contain the idea of salvation, or have reference to it. Nothing is so frequently named and presented in the Bible as sin and evil on the one hand, salvation and life on the other; this every one knows who is not a stranger to the holy book. It would be a waste of time and space, if we should adduce *all* the passages here in which these ideas occur.

The whole Bible moves apparently round the idea of salvation, as round its axis. Its two parts, the Old and New Testaments, are related to each other, so to speak, as the development of evil and of salvation. The Old Testament is especially the history of evil, the New Testament that of salvation on earth. In the former, the way *from* God, in the latter the way *to* God, is historically predominant. In the former are everywhere presented to us, from the first page to the last, the unhappy consequences of the Fall; in the latter, the blessed effects of reunion with God. *Death is the penalty of sin*—this is the principal theme of the Old; *but the gift of God is eternal life*—this is the sum of the New Testament (Rom. vi. 23). From the sin of

the first man to the entire ruin of the Jewish nation, is spun a dark unbroken thread of evil. But above it—and this is the relieving part of the Old Testament—seems equally unbroken, even unto Christ's advent, a bright thread of announcements of salvation, which commences at the same historical point at which the development of the misery of sin begins.

Salvation and help from God are, accordingly, the contents of almost all the prayers of all the Godfearing;[13] rescue and salvation are the goal of their pious wishes, the object of their hope and longing.[14] The divinely inspired seers announce salvation,[15] the oppressed people of the Lord expect salvation, an abundance of pleasant pictures of salvation are diffused, in the various apprehensions of the one fundamental thought, through all the legends and lays of the Old Covenant. Fountain, cup, light, shield, helmet—everything that is beneficent, rejoicing, protective, elevating, on earth, becomes the bearer and emblem of heavenly salvation,[16] to which the eyes of the faithful look, and for which their souls thirst.

And when in Jesus the long-expected and promised One is born, the heavenly messengers announce to the inhabitants of earth the words of joy, Unto you is born this day, a Saviour;[17] and as through the history of the Old Testament sounded the announcement that He *would* come, so henceforth peals through

[13] Ps. vi. 3, xiv. 7, xlvi. 2, l. 23, lxxxv. 7, cxviii. 14, etc. The root of the biblical conception of salvation is undoubtedly external, physical. So in the Old Test., when God is called a Saviour, 1 Chron. xvi. 35; Ps. lxxxv. 5; Isa. xliii. 11. Cf. Tit. i. 3, 4, iii. 4, 6; 1 Tim. ii. 3, etc., it is generally as deliverer from danger, or as affording protection from enemies. So also in the New Test., Acts vii. 25, xxvii. 34; Heb. xi. 7, etc. The conception of salvation was spiritualized gradually, as the Mosaic theocracy was transformed into the Christian Kingdom of Heaven.

[14] Gen. xlix. 18; Micah vii. 7; Ps. cxix. 81, 166, 174, etc.

[15] Isa. xii. 2, li. 5, lii. 7, lvi. 1; Hos. xiii. 9, 14; Jer. viii. 22, xlvi. 11; Hab. iii. 18, etc.

[16] Isa. xii. 3; Joel iii. 23; Ps. cxvi. 13, xxvii. 1, vii. 11, xviii. 36; Isa. lix. 17; Eph. v. 17; Ps. xviii. 3, cxxxii. 17, v. 13; Isa. xlv. 8, lxi. 10, 11, etc.

[17] Luke ii. 11.

history the joyful tidings that He *is* come.[18] This ever-resounding Christmas carol from henceforth resolves gradually into itself all the dissonances of human life. History would be an insufferably harsh consonant, without the vowel sounding with and through it, of the love of God in the life of Christ.

To be the Saviour of men, to redeem the captives, to heal the broken-hearted,[19]—this Jesus on His public appearance declared to be His peculiar calling. As a Saviour, in the comprehensive sense of the word, He wanders through the land of Judea;[20] the sick and wretched flow to Him from all sides, and receive from Him healing and forgiveness of sins.[21] His apostles extol Him as the Saviour of the world, even of all men; and so the Gospels represent Him from whom they come.[22] To save, help, free, redeem, give life, bless,[23]—these are the expressions by which the Apostles designate the effect of the power of their Lord; and all that which, rich in blessing, proceeds from Him, all that He does and desires on earth, they, as He Himself, comprehend in the single word Salvation;[24] and they know not how better to express the peculiar power both of His teaching and of His life and death, than by the conception of that which is saving or has power to save.[25]

If now we turn to Biblical theology, we cannot but perceive that all its other main ideas are germinally contained in, and organically developed from, the idea of that which has power to

[18] Tit. ii. 11; 1 John iv. 9.

[19] Luke iv. 18. Cf. Matt. i. 21.

[20] Matt. viii. 16; Mark vi. 56; Luke v. 15; John vi. 2, etc.

[21] Luke xvii. 13; Mark i. 40; Matt. ix. 2.

[22] Luke i. 30, iii. 6; 1 John iv. 14; Acts iii. 16, iv. 12, xiii. 47; Tit. ii. 13; Phil. iii. 20.

[23] Matt. x. 22; Mark x. 26; Luke xiii. 23; John iii. 17, xii. 47; Acts xv. 1; Rom. v. 10; 1 Cor. v. 5; Gal. iii. 13; Eph. ii. 5; 1 Thess. i. 10; 2 Tim. i. 9; Heb. ii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 18; James i. 21, etc.

[24] John iv. 22; Luke xix. 9; Acts xiii. 26; Rom. xiii. 11, i. 16; 1 Thess. v. 9: Eph. i. 13; 1 Cor. i. 30; Col. i. 14; Heb. ii. 3, 10, etc.

[25] Tit. ii. 11; Acts xxviii. 28.

save; and that, consequently, no other will conduct us so well as it to the living comprehension of the whole of Christianity. In order to convince ourselves of this, let us attend to the unfolding of that which is comprised in this idea.

If we designate the Christian element as that which is savingly efficient, we express by this that it aims principally at life, or that by its nature and tendency it is thoroughly practical. For the idea of salvation proceeds only from life, and has no other object. Salvation is the most natural and the most general desire of life, and obtains its truest and highest fulfilment through Christ, because this fulfilment proceeds from Christ, and stretches into eternity. And thus the essentially *theological* part in the Christian conception of salvation, intimates the divine origin of Christianity.

But if the Christian, considered as the saving element, has life for its object, then life regarded from the Christian point of view must appear full of evil and needing salvation,—therefore not in a gratifying, but in a disturbing condition. And, in fact, the Christian view of life, in so far as life still lacks its salvation, is a serious and painful one.[26]

This characteristic sorrowful trait of Christianity, in its view of unholy life, cannot, however, if Christianity is indeed savingly efficient, and operating as such, be a fixed and permanent one; it rather must disappear, and yield to the expression of the clearest serenity and joy, so soon as Christianity has attained its object, and has penetrated any part of life with the power of its salvation. And, as we know, the Scriptures also declare the kingdom of God to be identical with peace and joy.[27]

But, if now Christianity procure and secure salvation for human life, it cannot, seeing that this life is one organized for consciousness and personality, pass by consciousness and personality; but it must enter into them, and incline both of them to the reception of its influence. If Christianity wished to

[26] Luke xix. 41. [27] Rom. xiv. 17.

operate on man without his knowledge, and against his will, its agency could not be or be called a saving one; because then it would set aside that which is just the most significant in this life. And thus, then, the saving agency of Christianity, if it will truly deserve the name, must always go first to the will and consciousness of man, and, if these are alienated, labour to turn them round towards itself. For which reason also, the first requirement, which ever precedes the kingdom of heaven, is the exhortation to repentance and conversion.[28]

Only he feels himself moved to accept the offered salvation, who knows and feels his sinful need and wretchedness.[29] Hence the remarkably frequent references of Christianity to sin and its consequences;[30] hence its zealous striving to bring men to the recognition and confession of their sins;[31] hence its making this recognition the indispensable condition of attaining salvation;[32] hence the violent struggle against all that hinders men from coming to the perception and sense of their sin, against heathenish degradation in the lust of the world and the flesh,[33] and against the pride of imagination and self-righteousness;[34] hence, also, the love and kindness towards sinners with which Christianity has been reproached both in ancient and modern times.[35]

Christianity, because it wishes to prove itself savingly efficient to the very heart of life, leads to a very different view of sin from that which the judgment of the world produces and cherishes. The world's judgment views sin, generally, only at its momentary appearance at single points in the surface of life,

[28] Matt. iii. 2, iv. 17; Luke xiii. 3, xv. 7; Acts ii. 38, xvii. 30, etc.

[29] Luke v. 31; Matt. ix. 12.

[30] Matt. v. 19, xxv. 31, sq.; Luke xiii. 3, sq.; John v. 14; Acts ii. 38; Rom. vi. 23; James i. 15, etc.

[31] Matt. xix. 16; Luke xvii. 10; Rom. iii. 23; Gal. iii. 22, etc.

[32] Matt. vii. 3; 1 John i. 8, 9.

[33] Matt. vi. 21, sq.; Luke xvii. 27; Phil. iii. 18, 19, etc.

[34] Matt. v. 20, xxiii. 2, sq.; Luke xviii. 9, etc.

[35] Luke vii. 34, 47, xv. 2, sq. Vide supra, p. 57, n. 98.

and does not regard it as existing where it is not externally visible. But Christianity teaches us to seek and recognise the essence of sin in the *whole of the disposition*, not in single manifestations of the same. It calls attention to the deadness of the idea of God in us, and demonstrates this inward alienation from God to be the true essence of sin.[36] But that no single human life is free from this alienation, is sufficiently evident from the effort which it costs every one to accustom himself inwardly to a continual looking up to God.

The saving agency of Christianity cannot be taken into view, on the one hand, without perceiving on the other the injurious effects of sin. Its working is everywhere manifest in an increasing weakness of the felt power of the presence of God in the inner life. Life loses him from the eye and from the heart; in the place of desire after Him, and communion with Him, come indifference, disinclination, and even positive repugnance. In the individual man, the Scriptures call this prevailing disposition, which is caused by sin, *flesh;* in entire human life, *the world*.[37] Between the flesh and the world, and Christianity, there can be no other relation than that of enduring, inappeasable conflict.

When man feels in his life the operation and power of sin, and recognises in the life of Jesus the holy sinless power of love, which can and will free him from his sin, there arises a joyful movement and confidence in his soul, or that spiritual susceptibility and strength which appropriates the saving efficiency of the Lord, embraces it, and holds it fast with entire heartiness. The Scriptures call this hearty joining one's-self to the Lord, and laying hold of His salvation with all the strength and fidelity of the mind, Faith; and Jesus and His apostles re-

[36] Matt. xxii. 2. sq.; Mark x. 22; Rom. i. 18, xiv. 23, xvii. 14. sq.; Ps. xiv. 1; Heb. xi. 6, etc.

[37] Gal. v. 17, 19; 1 John ii. 16; Rom. viii. 4, 12, 13; 2 Cor. x. 2; John vii. 7, xii. 31, xiv. 17; 1 John iii. 1, 13; Eph. ii. 2; Phil. ii. 15, etc.

quire and designate faith as the sole ground of all true recovery and blessedness[38] on the side of man.

On the side of God, love is represented as the sole ground of His blessing men, and, accordingly, occupies the highest position and dignity in the Christian system,[39] and is viewed as the chief cause which moves God to render His mortal creatures capable of enjoying with Him eternal life. For this mystery of the decree made by God from all eternity of creating a world in order to fill it with the reflection of His glory and the life of His love, has become most plainly manifest to the world in the mission of Jesus.[40] And if, as we before remarked, there proceeds from the conception of saving efficiency, a distinct reference to the conception of faith, in this conception is expressed, not less clearly and eminently, the highest and mightiest thing in Christianity, namely, love; since all life, even that of brutes, in all acts of salvation, feels immediately this compassionating love.[41]

But the divine love desires to prove itself of saving efficiency, not merely to single men or nations, but to the whole of life, because, as the divine, it is the all-embracing. It desires that assistance be rendered to all,[42] and that all come to the knowledge of the truth and to blessedness in God. It wishes to rouse every individual, and the entire human life, from resignation to wickedness, and to unite it in the consciousness of adoption with the Father in heaven.[43]

[38] Matt. xvii. 20; Mark ix. 23, x. 52; Luke vii. 50; John iii. 16, xx. 29; 1 John v. 4; Rom. iii. 28, iv. 3, 5; Gal. iii. 23. sq.; Heb. xi. 1, etc.

[39] Mark xii. 30; John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9, 10; Rom. v. 8, viii. 32, xiii. 8; 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

[40] Rom. xvi. 23, 26; Eph. i. 9, 10, iii. 3, sq.; Col. i. 16, 26, sq.; 1 Tim. iii. 16, etc.

[41] It was from this side, as merciful love, that heathenism was first impressed by Christianity (Neander's Church History, i. p. 425); and the Church fathers and Reformers had this characteristic trait in view, when they represented Christ Himself as the Samaritan in the parable, Luke x. 30, sq

[42] 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 9.

[43] Matt. v. 45; Luke xv. 4; Mark xvi. 15; Acts i. 8; Gal. iii. 26, iv. 5–7; 1 John iii. 1.

And thus then, the work of a love, which has for its object and effect such a salvation, is represented as the work of redemption and propitiation,[44] of liberation from the depressing, corrupting power of sin, and of elevation to God's blessed favour and grace. Propitiation, or the bringing back of life into the love of God, is the pinnacle of all true religion and piety, and the culmination of the saving work of the Redeemer.

If here, on the one hand, is disclosed to us the sense of the words freedom and peace,[45] words by which the Redeemer designates His gifts, and the intimate relation of these conceptions to the fundamental conception of the savingly efficient, this, on the other hand, gives to our mental eye that direction in which we can plainly discern the constant progress from the Creation to the Redemption, and can understand the latter to be the completion and crown of the former.[46] For the power which works in the world of personal beings, in the form of saving love, is nothing at all but a testimony of the same divine power, which makes itself known in the purely physical territory as omnipotence, and will not suffer that which it has created to perish.[47]

In no time and place in human life has this will left itself entirely without a witness[48] of the divine goodness, but has everywhere, and in manifold ways, laboured to awaken the desire of men, and to guide it to the eternal. These labours could not, from the nature of their origin, be wholly without success; but since the divine operations on human souls are never compulsory or irresistible,[49] these successes could not be

[44] Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45; Eph. i. 14; Col. i. 14; Gal. iii. 13; Rom. iii. 24; Tit. ii. 14; 2 Cor. v. 18–21; 1 John ii. 2, etc.

[45] John viii. 37, xiv. 27; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Rom. v. 1, viii. 21. Cf. Euseb. Praep. Ev. 1. p. 10, 5. 179 (ed. Vig.).

[46] John i. 2–4; Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 2, etc. Of modern theologians, *Nitzsch* especially, has shown the close connection between redemption and creation.—*System of Christian Doctrine*, Edinburgh 1849.

[47] Ps. cxlv. 15, 16 (Wisdom xi. 22, sq.).

[48] Acts xiv. 15, xvii. 27; Rom. i. 19.

[49] John vi. 64, 66; viii. 37, sq.; Luke xiii. 34, etc.

universal, but only isolated ones, interrupted by unaffected intervals. And so, if those testimonies for God in human life, remaining confined to this, had lacked the chief property of life, namely, the continual progress of self-development from within outwards; they would only here and there, shining out, and then disappearing like brilliant meteors, have flashed through the night of godlessness on earth.

Now, that in Christianity the divine has made itself known in a manner entirely different from this, and that Christianity is thereby essentially different from all other and earlier divine revelations, the expression 'savingly efficient,' renders clearly prominent. For, as the first half reminds us of the existence of something evil, which Christianity has to counteract, so the second half intimates the inadequacy of all unchristian and non-christian aimings at salvation, and characterizes the Christian redemption of life as a universal and real one,[50] in contrast to one which is brought about only here and there, or merely in the bloom of life, *i.e., in the idea.*

Sin has manifestly a life and a history;[51] it has taken and is taking place; it has passed from thought into action, from the will into the accomplishment; it is still ever shaping itself out from the idea into reality, and every one of its realizations goes on producing misdeeds. Accordingly, there would be little or nothing accomplished against sin, if life, instead of its organic connection, had only single tendencies, strong indeed, but unconnected towards the external; or, if piety stood merely as an idea, like a fixed star, above the movements of sinful life on earth. No! that which will *really* take away the power and dominion of sin, must meet it in its own sphere and in a nature not more unsubstantial than its own, therefore in *reality* and *life*. Only then is Christianity a match for sin; when the former, as the latter, has its occurrence in and of

[50] John i. 16, 17, iv. 23, 24, xiv. 6; 1 John ii. 21, iii. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 7; Heb. x. 26, etc.

[51] Gen. iii. 6; Rom. v. 12, sq.; James i. 14, 15.

itself; only then can its piety penetrate life, when this itself has penetrated to life,[52] and has brought itself forth as such into the world.

'And the Word became flesh,' says the Evangelist,[53] 'and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.'—Yes, this is the most significant and peculiar point in Christianity; that it is not merely an idea, but throughout life, deed, power, and history;[54] that its divinely filled life knows nothing of that sighing and running up and down by the gulf, which, to the captive in sin, divides the other side from this side, the thinking of the good from the doing thereof.

Now, as human life in the history of sin, shows a continual departure from God, so in the life of Christ it shows a continual attraction towards Him;[55] as the origin of the history of sin is connected with an act, so in the history of redemption this is not less the case. The active life of the Redeemer becomes, in the richest sense of the word, an accomplished work of redemption by the act of His death;[56] for now, first in opposition to that constant withdrawing of the life of sin from God, is perfectly manifested the constant nearness to God of the love of Christ; and the holy inspiring power of this life and death lies especially in this, that in them the love of man to God is as much revealed and illustrated, as the love of the Godhead to men.[57]

[52] 1 John iii. 14; James ii. 20, sq. The practical views of Christianity of James agree much more harmoniously with the speculative views of John and Paul, than many theologians suppose. James does not demand works, in opposition to Paul, who insists on faith; he only gives directions to distinguish the *living faith of the heart* from the *dead faith of the intellect*, Matt. vii. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 20; 2 Tim. iii. 5. Cf. *Neander* Apost. K. G. S. 449, ff.

[53] John i. 14; 1 John i. 1–3.

[54] Acts ii. 22; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24; 2 Tim. i. 7–10; James ii. 26.

[55] John x. 30, xiv. 10, xvii. 21, etc.

[56] John xix. 30; Luke xxiii. 46. [57] John xv. 13; Rom. v. 8, sq.

The power which embodies itself in act, works and goes forth from it again; the work breathes out the *spirit* which created it.[58] Inspiration flowed from the divinely animated life of Christ; the spirit of the Lord pervaded the witnesses of His death and resurrection; the Spirit of the Lord wafted from them the sleeping germs of the divine in-dwelling into the souls of men, and they bloomed up into a kingdom of heaven on earth,[59] to a common life of love, faith, and hope,[60] which overcomes death, because it is born of God, and is therefore the true eternal life.[61] And as the Spirit of God is designated the Author of the life of Christ, so He proves Himself also the animating power, which effects spiritual regeneration in the carnal life of man,[62] and in the history of the world produces the history of the Church,—the advancing growth of a church of God among men, preserving the saving efficiency within it.[63]

If now the *one* conception of saving efficiency unfolds in this way, as we have seen, all the principal ideas of the Bible, we can hardly doubt that we have in this conception apprehended the essential and characteristic element of Christianity.

And, finally, it contributes not a little to the confirmation of this view, that we thus obtain, without seeking it, an understanding of the essentials of Judaism and Heathenism. If, namely, the Christian element has been made known to us as that which has saving efficacy, the Jewish is immediately presented as that *expecting* salvation, the heathen as *inventing* salvation; and to whom is it not evident that the characteristic features of the two forms of religious life are thus adequately designated? The expectation of salvation, life in *faith* and *hope*, has been, and remains from Abraham to our days, the

[58] John xv. 26, 27, xvi. 7, sq., xx. 22, 23; Acts ii. 4.

[59] Matt. xiii. 24, xxii. 2, 9; Luke xvii. 20, 21; 1 Cor. iv. 20.

[60] Acts ii. 44; Gal. iii. 28; Eph. iv. 5; 1 John iv. 7.

[61] John i. 13, iii. 6, v. 24, vi. 47; 1 John v. 4, 12, etc.

[62] Luke i. 35; John iii. 5; Tit. iii. 5, 6.

[63] Acts ii. 47, iv. 4, v. 14, xiv. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 24; Rev. xi. 15, xix. 4, 6.

soul and the fundamental direction of Judaism.[64] And the seeking of satisfaction in *devising* salvation, because the real divinely bestowed salvation was wanting,—this moves as the chief element of heathenism, evidently from gross Fetichism, on through all forms of heathen symbolism, plasticism, and liturgicism, even up into the ethereal regions of intellectual idol-worship, in which, instead of the God who made the heaven and earth, that imaginary deity is adored, which the mind itself weaves out of its own vapoury ideas.

[64] Gen. xv. 5, sq., xvii. 2; Luke ii. 25, etc.

CHAPTER VI.

THAT WHICH IS CLEARLY CHRISTIAN IN PLATO AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

If now we have in this manner recognized the Christian element in itself, the Christian element in Plato and his philosophy cannot long remain concealed from us. We need no longer to seek it here and there, or compose it laboriously from single perceptions; rather, so soon as we turn from the knowledge obtained of what is Christian to the Platonic philosophy, is it from the whole of this immediately evident to us. And thus, it is a living insight to which we now attain, since the subject itself produces it and calls it forth in us, and it proceeds not from abstract thinking *within* us, but from the fresh impression of the subject *upon* us.

Salvation, we saw, or redemption and godliness of human life is the sublime work and aim of Christianity, and this salvation is also unmistakeably the inspiring thought and object of the Platonic philosophy.

The Christian element in Plato and in Platonism presents itself therefore in the conception of a saving purpose.[1]

With the apprehension of this idea we have attained the goal of our inquiry; and that thus we have arrived at an entirely different stage of knowledge of the Platonic Chris-

[1] The frequent occurrence in Plato of the words Saviour, Salvation, etc., and in an ethical sense, is a kind of testimony for the correctness of the above view. The condition of eternal life, Phaed. 107. c. [i. p. 116]. Cf. Tim. 88. b. [ii. p. 404]. The chief striving of mankind, Gorg. 512. [i. p. 215].—Tim. 86. c. 87. b. [ii. pp. 402, 3]. Alc. 1. 126. a. [iv. p. 352]. Rep. 3, 409. d. 4, 426. 10, 608. e. [ii. pp. 92, 109, 299]. Theaet. 170. b. [i. p. 404]. Legg. 3, 689. e. 4. 715. d. [v. pp. 99, 139].

tianity from that in the first part of our examination, does not need to be discussed or proved. For what was then mere opinion, has now been raised to real knowledge,—what was then a matter of feeling and first impression, rests here on well-founded cognition: the indefinite general acceptance that there is something Christian in Plato has changed into the definite perception of what this is, and wherein it properly consists, and instead of the long series of particulars over which the eye hovered, inquiring which among them would most express the Christian element, we have now a single conception before us, which, in itself, comprises and expresses the whole fulness of that which is Christian in Plato.

But is this last really the case? Is the idea expressed really the most striking and most comprehensive? Is it really that which designates most correctly the Christianity of Plato? Does it really possess, as is maintained, *all* the Christian points and tendencies in *one* general view?—this needs still a special explanation and corroboration. This, however, will be neither difficult nor prolix. For to place beyond doubt the correctness and exhaustiveness of the conception we have found, we need only take the same course with reference to it, as we observed with regard to the main idea of the previous chapter. If we allow to the conception of saving purpose a development as various as possible of all its contents, it will be clearly seen, both that it contains all that is essential to Platonism in a religious view, and also that this *all* stands in the closest relation to what is essential in Christianity. At the same time, such a development will also serve perfectly to explain and justify our course of procedure in the second main division of our examination. It will now be recognized as a really genetic one. For the subsequent discussion can appear to the attentive gaze only as the fruit of previous considerations; and it is not so much new perceptions and disclosures which it affords, as rather an organically arranged composition of those which were before perceived singly and at intervals. At almost every

step that we have taken forwards, we have seen more or less plainly one of the Christian sides and properties of Platonism, which now stand before us collected into a single view. So the student of nature finds, in the lower orders of animals, all the organs singly distributed, as it were, and one after another pre-eminently developed, but discovers them all again most beautifully united in the human form.

The conception of saving purpose intimates, in the first place, the *teleological* element, which is quite peculiar to Platonism as well as to Christianity. Platonism is, as we have perceived, of a thoroughly teleological character. Plato was most fond of regarding the phenomena of the world from the teleological point of view; his thoughts, for the most part, take at once a teleological direction, the ideas of object and purpose hovered in all his inquiries continually before his soul; whence also, as we remarked in the second chapter, he possessed, as an author, that rare and truly Christian quality of purity in his productivity, and that severe deportment of mind which does not allow itself to be turned from the direction once taken by the lively thronging in of new thoughts and interests. This intense teleological character of his philosophizing expresses itself also, as we saw, with sufficient plainness in its external form; we have already above recognized the dialogal form of the Platonic philosophy as a product of its dialectic and teleological spirit (p. 175).

From the teleological spirit in Platonism, as in the Bible,[2] spring its sublimity and nobleness, and, above all, its dignified piety. For noble and sublime must be (and thus make itself known also in his writings) his view of the universe, who, looking beyond the movements of things in the fore-ground, seeks and finds on the distant horizon the points towards which their inner nature bids them strive, and who, however widely the various directions of the different forces may seem to diverge from each other, endeavours to keep firmly in view the one goal, at which they all finally meet (see above p. 170). This it is

[2] Ps. civ.; Job xxxviii. 1, sq.; Isa. xl. 12, etc.

which renders the Platonic philosophy especially worthy to be honoured as Christian, that it does not become a barrier to the author, and hide from him that which lies beyond and above it, his knowledge and will go out beyond the world of thoughts, his God is greater than his philosophy.[3] The thought of *subordination* (which we have observed in several relations at different points in this examination), is the fundamental thought of his Ethics and of his ethical consideration of the world, and that which determines the subordinate or co-ordinate relations of things to each other, is their relation to God, their greater or less nearness to Him, their being more or less moved by Him.

The teleological element in Platonism borders immediately, as is evident, on the theological element, the one even passes over into the other, *this* is transformed into *that*, and *vice versa*, as may be said also of the teleological element in Christianity. The idea of a purpose includes that of a will which has the purpose. Now, Plato's inquiring mind being directed to the knowledge, not merely of single ends in the life of nature and of man, but also of the final object towards which the great whole is striving, he is necessarily led to the perception of *the* will, which embraces this whole, and which has formed it for, and is conducting it to, that final object.[4]

This will cannot be an unconscious or foolish one; for foolish or unconscious willing consists just in this, that it has no specific object, and does not know what it wills. In the plan of nature and the final object of the whole is accordingly revealed to Plato the wisdom of *the* will which must be conceived as the originator of these purposes. And, if the cause of the universal plan be first recognized as wisdom, it must also be conceived of as power and goodness,[5] for the absolutely immovable can never be an end in the true sense of the word; and wisdom, as such, is the consciousness of the alone true and good, and would not be

[3] (1 John iii. 20). Rep. 6, 506. e. 508. b. [ii. pp. 195, 197].
[4] Tim. 30. b. [ii. p. 334]. Legg. 10, 904 [v. p. 441–2].
[5] Phil. 28. c. [iv. p. 38]. Legg. 10, 902. e. [v. p. 439].

wisdom if it willed that which it does will in and with the world, for any other reason than because it has recognized the same to be the very best possible.

Here then is the point at which the intimate relation of the Platonic doctrine of God to the Christian, which seemed in the first part of our examination, to be a mere apparent resemblance, becomes truly manifest to us; here is the point, whose existence we could only just touch upon above (p. 32 sq.) where opens almost the same prospect and insight into the world's history to the Platonic view as to the Christian; to both the world's history presents itself as the totality of movements which aim at one sacred final object determined by God.[6]

By its striving after salvation as an end, the Platonic philosophy attaches itself consciously to the striving and struggling of history, and wills to assist the latter, according to its ability, in the attainment of its great end. Looking out on this, the Platonic philosophy makes its highest and first object the salvation of human life, the elevation of this to its God-like spiritual dignity, wishing to render life capable of recognizing itself in its true character, of perceiving itself to be a part of the great whole, and of rendering to this whole that which it owes to it.[7] And apprehended from this side, the Platonic philosophy is seen to be an entirely peculiar, indeed, almost single phenomenon of its kind in history. For it is almost the only one, which, with so genuine a scientific character and bearing, has such a genuine religious conception of its nature and vocation, and has formed itself so worthily in accordance with this conception. After Aristotle philosophy cherished (as we saw above) a wholly different consciousness of what it is and should be, which has remained, on the whole, pretty much the same to our day. Since then it has separated from it more or less, all that does not immediately appertain to abstract thinking, and has obtained a more distinct conception of its *purely scientific* spirit and aim. And since, soon after Christianity appeared in the world with

[6] Legg. 10, 894. b. [v. p. 421]. [7] Legg. 10, 903. b. [v. p. 440].

the vocation to obtain that object for which Plato strove, it has not again been possible for philosophy to attribute that significance to its permanence, which Plato had given or allowed to it. New Platonism did indeed strive after it with great effort, and not without momentary success. But though it has a striving after an ethico-religious world-significance in common with Platonism, it yet stands far behind this, in respect to truly scientific value, as was clearly seen above. And even Pythagorism manifestly does not in this equal Platonism, which it preceded in the tendency towards salvation.

The teleological character of the Platonic way of thinking, having now introduced us into the fundamental thought of his theology, and shown us that his thought of the highest wisdom necessarily comprehends within it the ideas of the highest power and goodness, and why it does so, we have thus seen the whole place of birth and nurture of his theory of salvation, and we can now perfectly understand why he ascribes and confides to philosophy the knowledge of the true, or the power and significance of a saviour; namely, because, as we have just perceived, the divine wisdom appeared to him from his teleological point of view to be inseparably *one* with *the* power, which wills and realizes the good in history. And the power which the heavenly original possesses cannot, according to his conviction, be wanting to the copy on earth, for there is only one true wisdom; and the divine wisdom does not change its intrinsic nature by entering into human life, and thus expressing itself in humanly conditioned thought and knowledge. What the heavenly wisdom, which pervades the universe, can do in the great, that the human wisdom, which embraces the whole of human life, can and must accomplish in the little. We can now also, at this point, from one principal conception of a saving purpose, see all the Christian doctrines and views of Plato unfold themselves in natural sequence.

If, namely, we look for the *starting-point* of the tendency of Platonism to salvation, we find this in its Christian view of the

corrupt condition of the world and of humanity. If we ask after the *means* by which Plato thinks to attain his sublime object, or the ways in which he proposes to oppose and overcome the depravity, we find these to proceed from the thoughts of God, which support and condition his whole philosophy, and which, we cannot deny, display many coincidences with these of Christianity. If, finally, we take more closely into view, the object of that tendency, the purposed salvation itself, then, as in the salvation of Christianity, we find redemption and atonement, or freedom and divine in-dwelling to be its essential parts; and we behold an enthusiastic confidence in the victorious might of the good and divine in earthly life, which testifies, in the strongest manner, to Plato's faith in the existence of Christ and His agency in the history of the world.

1. At the foundation of the saving purpose which the Platonic philosophy bears unmistakeably within it, evidently lies the view of the necessity of salvation to life, and of the existence and power of evil in it. Plato's gaze, undeceived by the serene exterior of life, penetrated to its heart;[8] his mind measured life by other rules than those of the common judgment of the world, for his recognition of the depraved character of life presupposes an ethico-religious consideration of life, and a lofty conception of its capacities and destination, since the conception of depravity is of theological origin and contents, and can be developed only from the consciousness of that which God wills in and with life, and which life is and accomplishes in this relation.

Now, if the perception of depravity and its destructive power and magnitude cannot be other than painful and disturbing to him, who is consciously impressed by the thought of the heavenly dignity and destination of life, we can understand in its true ground and bearing, the *earnest sadness*, spoken of before (p. 77), which is found in the Platonic as in the Christian consideration of the world. This mournful earnestness forms a characteristic trait of Plato's philosophy and view

[8] Alc. 1. 132. a. [iv. p. 364].

of the world, by which, however truly it may in other respects be a genuine product of the Hellenic mind, it is distinguished essentially from the predominant worldliness of the Hellenic disposition. Plato, like Christianity, views depravity as existing not merely sporadically and only superficially; he recognizes rather its universal spread and dominion among men, and that it has penetrated and rooted itself in their deepest heart. He was almost the first of the heathen philosophers who found *sin*, not merely in the porch, but in the sanctuary of the inner life, and suspected in the passions, more than mere *passivity*, viz., *acts* of the soul. To him therefore the presence of wickedness was disclosed in places where, on account of its momentary impression, it remained hidden from the ordinary gaze, and for this reason was supposed not to exist. Hence Schleiermacher rightly designates that as one of Plato's most Christian remarks, that the bad, which so often lies unknown and latent in our souls, is not infrequently revealed in dreams. If now, as may be judged from this, the biblical conception of the *Flesh* is one not foreign and unknown to Plato,[9] his attention to the general deportment of life towards the eternal and divine, conducts him likewise to the scriptural conception of the *world*. He does indeed portray exactly the low sensuous character of the great multitude,[10] which asks not after God,[11] and only to appearance, either as directly hypocritical, or as self-deceiving, sometimes takes the part of piety, but immediately contends against it with violent repugnance, whenever, instead of a mere *external* appurtenance to life, it would become a true inward earnestness.[12] He portrays severely and strikingly that universal hurry in pressing towards earthly pomp and pleasure, that complete resignation of the undiscriminating many to the restless stream of

[9] Cf. Legg. 1, 644. e. [v. p. 32–3], with Rom. vii. 15, sq.; Gal. v. 17, etc.

[10] Gorg. 492. a. [i. p. 190]. Cf. Rep. 2, 365. c. 6, 492. b. 8, 560. d. [ii. pp. 44–5, 180, 250].

[11] Cf. Rep. 8, 555. c. [ii. p. 245], with Matt. v. 24; Luke xvi. 13.

[12] Apol. 35. d. 39. c. Theaet. 177. a. [i. pp. 23, 27, 412].

fleeting appearances, images and feelings,[13] that proud self-satisfaction of the prevalent way of thinking, which does not wish to be disturbed in its sweet composure, nor to be enlightened by significant monitions of the eternal and sacred,[14]—which struggles against the unpleasant truth, like naughty children against bitter medicine,[15] and hangs with passionate love on all, which flatteringly heightens the sensuous feeling of life.[16]

And thus we have clearly evinced from the heart of the Platonic philosophy, what above (p. 57) could only be concluded as highly probable from the juxtaposition of single expressions, viz., that this philosophy is more Christian in its doctrine of the nature and operation of sin, than any other of the ancient world. For the evil, at the removal of which it aims, proceeds, according to its view, from nothing else than sin. And by sin it, no more than Christianity, understands that which the world means by it, the single act, or so-called immorality in its grossly hateful form, but here, as everywhere else, it penetrates to the centre, and brings to light as the true nature of sin the false and empty nullity, which knows how to clothe itself in the deceptive appearance of the True and Beautiful, and thus causes that which is really good to be neglected or mistaken.[17]

Christianity also designates this lie, this captivating and corrupting false representation, as one of the most characteristic, and at the same time most dangerous parts of sin. It is one of the most important, yet ever ignored truths, which Plato has, in common with Christianity, only otherwise expressed, that the devil can transform himself into an angel of light, and that he is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. 2 Cor. xi.

[13] Rep. 8, 560. e. 561. d. [ii. p. 251].

[14] Apol. 30. e. [i. p. 17]. Cf. Acts xxiv. 25.

[15] Gorg. 521 e. [i. p. 226]. Cf. Rep. iv. 426, a, b. [ii. p. 109].

[16] Gorg. 463. a. sq. 464.c. d. [i. p. 135–7].

[17] Soph. 228. b, c. [iii. p. 122]. See especially also Rep. 5, 479, c, d. 7, 515. b. etc. [ii. pp. 167, 203].

14; John viii. 44.[18] Only by lying does the evil obtain power over men, by appearing like the true and good. Did the irrational and disgraceful present themselves in their true form, no one would believe in the former, or allow himself to be led astray by the latter. But sin knows how to imitate the language of reason, and makes so innocent and amiable an appearance, that it is taken for virtue itself. On this rests its extended dominion and imperishable existence in human life, and therefore the bitter striving and contending which pervades Platonism, against 'whited sepulchres, and ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing' (Matt. vii. 15, xxiii. 27) may be understood in a Christian sense. Moreover, only the continued observation of life can make this thought completely understood. We must regard life attentively in all its relations, in order with grief to perceive as universal, and making itself known in the greatest as in the least things, the all-corrupting influence of that which, in itself contemptible, can yet gain the general favour more quickly than the solid and worthy. It is not difficult to recognise what it is which procures for this mere nullity everywhere such rapid esteem and favour. It is principally the indolence and grossness of the sensuous nature which exists and is strong in every man; which feels itself most appealed to and satisfied by that which is like it, and hence, in the enjoyment of works of art, for example, prefers the delectable to the truly beautiful; because, to appreciate the former does not require an effort, but to do homage to the latter, it must first go out of itself, and raise itself with earnestness and perseverance to a higher intellectual elevation, which it either may not or cannot do. And to him who understands this, it will not be inexplicable, why, in the territory of religion, the shallowest and narrowest views are commonly the most popular and most widely diffused.

Platonism further here and there, like Christianity, apprehends sin from a theological point of view, and represents it as

[18] Cf. Phil. 40. c. [iv. p. 60], and Soph. 260. c. [iii. p. 172].

the life of the creature *without* God, and *apart* from Him.[19] The inclination to this lies, according to Plato's view, already touched upon, in the creaturely life, as such;[20] and the decided manifestation of this disposition in real life, the actual going astray from God, he regards as the continually, in the gross and the detail, self-repeating theme of history.[21] The good is everywhere to him the original and first, whence also in history he believes in all earnest in an earlier and better condition of life. All deterioration he traces to divergence and departure from the good, and the dissolution of the original connection with the same. And thus to him, as to the Biblical Christian, the history of the world appears, on the one hand, as the history of apostasy.

2. But, on the other hand, also as the history of return to God, and of reunion with Him.[22] For as in the life of nature and the material life of the world, at the extreme point of its relative departure from God, there comes in a turning and renewing of the original relation to Him, so, also, in the spiritual life of man, the innate, and only for a period suppressed, tendency must again break through, and obtain the upper hand. In the life of nature, it is the inseparable bond of *necessity* which effects this turning; but human life follows the gentler attraction of a *love*, which comes from heaven and leads to heaven. Pure holy love is the uniting and everlasting bond of the higher world of spirit.[23] It is the mighty lever force of

[19] Theaet. 176. a, b. [i. p. 411]. Rep. 589. e. 4, 441. b. Cf. Tim. 30. a. [ii. pp. 280, 126, 334]. In these and similar passages is expressed the biblical thought, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God,' Isa. lix. 2. Cf. Alc. 1. 134. c. [iv. p. 369].

[20] Tim. 86. d. sq. [ii. p. 402].

[21] Phaedr. 284, c. sq. [?]. Pol. 269. a. 273. b. [iii. pp. 210, 216]. Legg. 10, 896. e. [v. p. 426]. Epin. 988. d. [vi. p. 29].

[22] Pol. 273. d. [iii. p. 217].

[23] Phaedr. 246. d. [i. p. 322]. Conv. 202. d. [iii. p. 533]. Cf. *Milton*, Par. Lost. 5, 589—

Love is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend!

the fallen race, the blessed way to truth and life, the purifying restorer of the erring and undeified soul to its eternal home. In the form of perfect beauty, it appears everywhere in life as the mediator between God and man, between the visible and the invisible, between spirit and matter; it wakes by its deeply penetrating ray the slumbering consciousness of the truly existent and imperishable, and directs the fluctuating longing of the heart that is moved to Him who alone can satisfy and calm it, even to God, the highest good.[24] For this is the motive principle of all love,—the *desire of the good*.[25] It is only a base love which does not obtain a clear conception of the real object after which it strives, and does not distinguish between the higher and lower good. And so, by virtue of this in-born attraction to the good, which allows no lasting peace to the soul, which is penetrated by true love, except in the highest good, love, according to the Platonic as the Christian doctrine, is the most efficient power in the attainment of the salvation aimed at; for which reason also, in the latter as in the former, it is accounted the greatest and highest among the heavenly powers.[26]

If now love is to become, in *fact*, the saving power in the life of men, then, since love excludes all compulsion and force, life must be brought before all things to the consciousness of its need of salvation, and thus to a willingness to be assisted from its wretchedness. All which hinders the awakening of this consciousness must be removed, and the way be cleared for the recognition of the truth. So the Platonic philosophy, like Christ, does not first bring peace into the world, but a sword.[27] It, like Christianity, is, on account of its saving purpose, of a thoroughly *polemic* and uncompromising nature. It, like this,

[24] Cf. Phil. 64. e. [iv. p. 105].

[25] Conv. 205. e. [iii. p. 540]. Cf. Rep. 6, 505. d, e. 486. a. [ii. pp. 194, 174]. Aristotle also held this view. Met. xii. 7.

[26] Cf. Conv. 202. e. sq. [iii. p. 533–4], and Rep. 3, 403. c. [ii. p. 86].

[27] Matt. 10, 34. Cf. Legg. 1, 647. c. [v. p. 37].

rises, as remarked above (p. 64), from inappeasable, irreconcileable hatred of the blinding vanity of the world, which has withdrawn from the alone true and sublime, and procured for itself the love and reverence which are their due. It, like this, contends not for its own, but for God's honour, and for His kingdom on earth ;[28] and it does not conceal any more than this, the long duration and difficulty of this contest, since it well knows that it may fight only with spiritual weapons, and that it can never obtain the victory merely from without, but only where it succeeds in exciting in the heart a co-operation with it, and for its ends,[29] which, from the glowing violence with which the lusts of the flesh encompass the life of the soul,[30] results but rarely and after long labours.

On this account, however, it proceeds directly, like Christianity, to cast a firebrand into the soul, to terrify the inner man from his security and repose, and to cause him to feel deeply at some point with shame and confusion the nothingness of that which he holds to be something.[31] This inward disturbance and terror is a pleasing sign of the salvability of him whom it fills ; yea, it is the first movement of the new life, thus rendered capable of the new birth.[32] Hence, like the Gospel, it humbles the proud, and raises the lowly (Luke i. 51, sq., etc.) ; fills the hungry with good things, and sends the rich empty away; it meets with cutting severity the despisers of the eternal,[33] but with a tender spirit points aright those who are longing for salvation.[34] It knows that, for the recognition

[28] Rep. 7, 519. c. [ii. p. 207]. Legg. 1, 631. d. 4, 713. c. sq. 9, 863. e. sq. [v. pp. 12, 135, 370–1].

[29] Rep. 9, 589. b. Cf. 4, 442. a. [ii. pp. 280, 127]. Legg. 10, 906. a. [v. p. 445].

[30] Cf. Theaet. 153. c. [i. p. 383]. See above, p. 161.

[31] Apol. 21. c. 23. d, e. [i. pp. 7, 9, 10], etc.

[32] Cf. supra, p. 131, n. 1, p. 162, and Soph. 230 [iii. p. 125]. Theaet. 168. a. [i. p. 401]. Cf. Conv. 209. b. [iii. p. 547].

[33] Theaet. 179. e. Prot. 316. d. Apol. 19. e. [i. pp. 415, 245, 5]. Soph. 219. d. [iii. p. 107], etc.

[34] Rep. 9, 589. c. [ii. p. 280]. Cf. Matt. xi. 21, sq., xxiii. 13, with xii. 19, 20.

of the *one* thing needful, there is no greater hindrance than the proud delusion: I am rich, and full, and need nothing.[35] Therefore it aims zealously to show to life its poverty, nakedness, and need, for which it is repaid, like Christianity, not with thanks, but with hatred, bitterness, ridicule, and scorn.[36] It makes dependent on the deep sorrow of true self-knowledge the blessed perception of Divine truth, and the attainment of *the* peace which the world cannot give.[37] It desires to open the closed eyes of the mind, and to turn them from darkness to the wonderful light which comes from above.[38] Like the Redeemer, it would begin the saving work with the enlightenment of the soul. But insight and knowledge is for the latter, as for the former, not the absolutely highest and last object, but, as we have already remarked, in a certain sense only a means to the end,[39] and a guide to God; for which reason also, in a genuine Christian spirit, it sets little value on written, but great value on oral instruction and immediate living influence (p. 117 n. 7). The light of knowledge must serve and glorify itself in love alone.

But having received from above[40] the vocation and the power to spiritualize life, it must extend its influence to the *whole* life, and strive to operate savingly on all its relations. Its principal gaze must be directed to the state and the family, or in general to the *common life* of men. For as the common life is favourable to the impulse of good towards universal communication and diffusion, so it promotes and facilitates also the

[35] Rev. iii. 17; Luke v. 31, 32, etc.

[36] Apol. 22. e. Gorg. 486. a. sq. [i. pp. 9, 183–4]. Rep. 6, 495. c. [ii. p. 183].

[37] Cf. supra, p. 172. Legg. 3, 689. d. [v. p. 99]. Cf. Rep. 4, 431. e. [ii. p. 115], and what is Christian peace, but the feeling of the harmony of the inner life with God? John xiv. 27, xvii. 23; Eph. ii. 14, etc.

[38] Here we meet in Plato with the biblical idea of conversion. Rep. 7, 532. b. 521. c. [ii. pp. 222, 211]. Cf. 2 Cor. iii. 16; 1 Thess. i. 9; Acts xviii. 18.

[39] See above, p. 101. Legg. 3, 689. c. [v. p. 99].

[40] Apol. 30. a. [i. p. 17].

rapid spread of evil, and secures to it a certain tenacious and hardly conquerable existence and power. Only by a common life filled with the spirit of the good, can the evil in life be successfully attacked and combated; only at the sources of its growth and diffusion can the power of wickedness be fundamentally broken.[41] These sources are in Plato's view, especially bad education, and bad political management. In opposition to the latter, he proposes in his Republic the model of a State founded in justice and guided by wisdom, and in this makes care for the culture and education of youth a chief concern of the rulers.[42] All that disturbs and weakens the eternal vital spark in the unfolding life of youth, he would keep far from it;[43] all that tames and softens the brutish violence of men, and subjects it to a higher will, he calls to aid in the business of education; and the fear of the Lord is for him the beginning of wisdom, and the summit of all culture[44] (Prov. ix. 10).

The Platonic philosophy, like the Gospel, strives also to take evil at its roots; like the Gospel, it places a large part of its hope of the coming kingdom of heaven, in the children, who are still susceptible to every influence (Mark x. 14); like the Gospel, it will contend with and overcome carnal selfishness, the mother of all unrighteousness, not merely by words and thoughts, but in deed and reality,[45] even by the common

[41] Rep. 6, 487. c. 492 d. [ii. p. 175–180]. Gorg. 518. a. 519. b. [i. p. 222–3].

[42] Rep. 4, 423. e. [ii. p. 107]. Legg. 6, 766. a. [v. p. 215].

[43] Hence, also, he will not allow frequency of new games, new melodies, charms, etc., that unsteadiness and love of novelty may not be implanted in children; for the true is in its nature simple and unchangeable, and a vacillating temper is therefore incapable of apprehending it. Legg. 7, 797. a. 798. b. [v. pp. 264, 266]. Rep. 4, 424. 6. b. 484. 6. [ii. pp. 107, 172].

[44] Rep. 2, 379. b. sq. [ii. p. 60]. Theaet. 176, 6. Gorg. 507. b. [i. pp. 411, 210].

[45] Hence a certain community of goods in the State. Rep. 5, 462. c. 464. a. sq. [ii. pp. 147, 148–9]. Cf. Acts ii. 44; 1 Cor. x. 24, xii. 14, sq.; Rom. xii. 5, and Cic. Leg. 1, 12.

life in a righteous state; and the opinion expressed above (p. 65), of the resemblance between the Platonic Republic and the biblical idea of the kingdom of God, is now shown to be perfectly correct and well-founded. By the expression, kingdom of God, the Bible designates, as we saw, a condition of social life really elevated to its true welfare, and therewith also to joyful willingness in all its relations to God; and for this manifestly strives also, as was shown to us above, the Platonic Republic. With the state, as a state, Plato has less to do than with the formation of a human life, corresponding in *fact* to the Divine idea, and by it moved and determined.

3. And that Platonism, with all its teachings and labours for salvation, aimed at nothing less than a *redemption* of life—of this the beautiful parable of the man in a cavern, which we considered above (p. 41 sq.), affords the most unambiguous testimony. As fettered and imprisoned, leading in profound darkness a life devoted to delusion and deceptive appearance, Plato by him represents mankind, and thus pronounces with sufficient clearness the necessity of an unfettering, an elevation to the light, and to life in freedom and truth. Not merely in poetic style, as in this parable, but also in many other passages of his writings, he designates directly and with precise words the redemption of men, the deliverance of their souls from error and sin, their introduction into the world of the alone true and good, as the final object and chief business of genuine philosophy.[46] In view of this sublime end, *death* appears to him to be the greatest benefactor of the spiritual life. For the redemption of the soul, according to his, as according to the Christian view, can be, so long as we wander here below in the body, only an inceptive and germinant, not a thoroughly perfect one. But in death, all the carnal and sensuous bonds, which ever draw the soul back into the pleasures and pains of temporal existence,[47] fall entirely off; now it follows undivid

[46] Phaed. 83. a. 84. a. [i. pp. 86–7].

[47] Phaed. 66. b. sq. [i. p. 64].

edly and unrestrictedly the impulse of its inmost being towards the eternal and divine, presupposing (of course) that its longing was thus directed during the bodily life. Consequently, by death it attains to perfect and glorious freedom; and thus the biblical thought of a desire to die and to attain to the true life, is seen to be also a principal thought of the Platonic philosophy.[48]

The same severe moral earnestness, which in Christianity makes redemption appear as man's most pressing need, is seen also in the Platonic indication of its necessity. Without redemption, no happiness! without inward union with God, no true salvation, no eternal life![49] This stands fast in the Gospel, and in Platonism; to be carnally minded is death, is the declaration of the one no less than the other.[50] He in whom the existent has never raised itself above the dissolving undulations of carnal excitements to a permanent free substantiality, has also no capability for an ascent into the eternal world of the existent; his innermost being remains also after death incorporated in the restless cycle of the becoming, with which it was indissolubly implicated in life.[51]

From this it is evident what Plato means by redemption, or rather, how he conceives this event in the life of the soul. He thinks of it as *a coming to one's-self*, an apprehending of one's-self as existent, as a severing of the inmost being from the surrounding element,[52] as a separation of one's-self from the changing mass of the world and life, as a *concretization of the original spiritual element in man to a divinely illuminated germ of light and life.*

[48] 2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 23. Phaed. 64, 6. [i. p. 62]. Cf. Crat. 403. d, e. [iii. p. 319]. Cic. Tusc. 1, 30, etc.

[49] John iii. 36; 1 John v. 12, etc.

[50] Rom. viii. 5; Gal. vi. 8, etc. Phaed. 69. c. 81, c, d. [i. pp. 68, 84]. Here belongs also the beautiful paraphrastic parallel to 1 John ii. 15–17. Rep. 10, 608 [ii. p. 298].

[51] Tim. 92. c. [ii. p. 409]. Legg. 10, 904 [v. p. 442].

[52] Rep. 10, 611. e. [ii. p. 302]. Theaet. 168. a. [i. p. 401]. Cf. Legg. 5, 726. [v. p. 153]. Alc. 1. 130. a. [iv. p. 360].

It is included in the idea of Christian redemption, that it cannot be accomplished in man by himself. Plato also was far from believing that man is his own redeemer. He certainly does not derive redemption from a divine person and love, but yet from *heavenly powers*, which operate in and upon earthly life; and he also, like Christianity, teaches man to raise his believing eye to a divinely instituted office of *purification* and *atonement*. This office of spiritualization and atonement, of uniting two worlds with each other, of elevating the earthly life to heaven, of glorifying the temporal by the eternal, and of connecting the human consciousness with the divine—is conferred upon the eternal Ideas. They are the living sources of salvation and happiness for men; they are, according to Plato's pious confidence, really the saviours of the world and of life;[53] and here we stand at the point where we can first truly recognise the high religious significance of the already considered doctrine of Ideas. Almost the same effects which Jesus exercises, as we saw above, by the pure ideality of his being on that which is really essential in the inner life of man, Plato expects from the Ideas. Their shining into the consciousness is the dawning of day to the soul, and the seizing and apprehending them is at the same time a raising one's-self to an individual existence. Ever more vigorously do they release the once awakened self in man; ever more beautiful do they form the mind which has intercourse with them, and do not allow it to sink again into the depths of coarseness and of the unthinking life of sensuousness. They form, by their inseparable communion with each other, by their inner, living connection, so to speak, that heavenly ladder,[54] on which one in a significant dream saw the angels of God ascend and descend. Seized by the Ideas, the clarified spirit mounts upwards from stage to stage, till the highest and last conducts him to the perception of the living Godhead.[55] For no pause is possible in the flight

[53] Rep. 6, 500. c. [ii. p. 188]. [54] Rep. 6, 510, b. sq. [ii. p. 200].
[55] Rep. 6, 511. b. 490. b. [ii. pp. 201, 177].

from idea to idea, until the One is arrived at, of whom and to whom all is and lives. In the apprehension of the first idea, nearest to the earthly life of the soul, is contained already the calm necessity of continued movement to the second higher, a dark element remaining in the recognition of the first, which points to a higher sphere, in which it will be unfolded to perfect clearness; just as, in the sphere of the sensuous, the earthly mass is raised from stage to stage of development, until it has, in an æsthetic light, attained the highest glorification of which its dark weight is capable.[56]

With the attainments of the percipient mind to the all-disposing Godhead is reached the summit of redemption; and the consciousness of redemption passes over into that of atonement, which beholds the world in God, and therefore sees God glorified in the world.[57] Atonement is the summit of the Platonic as of the Christian wisdom and knowledge. Reconciliation of antitheses, and their removal in a higher unity, comprehending both, is throughout the concern of the whole of Platonism, both in its theoretical and practical parts; and we have already seen in Plato's serene irony a sure mark of a reconciling endeavour and a reconciled consciousness. At the summit of the Platonic knowledge the mind is beyond the dialectic movement in the circle of antitheses, and the wondrous unity in the great whole of the world and life is becoming continually more clear to it. The war of antitheses is here reduced to a beneficial interaction, and this balancing is not an extirpation or disabling of the contending forces (see above, p. 158), but a comprehension and subordination of them to the highest Might, and to its sacred objects. The highest power is that of the good, which, as remarked already, eternally desires and manifests its existence and nature only in the world of phenomena.[58] The whole world, being its work, is a system of forces

[56] Rep. 10, 616. b, c. Cf. Tim. 31. b. sq. [ii. pp. 307, 335].

[57] Rep. 7. 517. b, c. [ii. p. 205].

[58] Gorg. 467. a. [i. p. 159]. Tim. 29. e. 41. a, b. [ii. p. 333, 345].

and ends, which all require and aid each other,[59] and realize in their collected activity no other than the Divine purpose. And all sin, with all evil, is not in a condition to frustrate the attainment of this purpose, or to disturb God's joy in His work.[60] For it is just the divine principle of his nature that he can take up contradiction into his life, and can suffer and subdue it. Hence every discord in the great whole of life has no further effect than to produce a fuller sounding out of the reconciling ground-tone, an increased vibration of the momentarily restricted force. The world and life have been engaged in conflict, but so also in victory; and this the growing victory of the good, the glorification of God in the kingdom of creatures.[61] And thus the entire history of the world, as seen from the throne of the Eternal, is nothing else than the answered prayer for glorification by his light and love.[62]

Plato would not have developed such a view of the world in his philosophy, if it had not lived and ruled in his heart. If we have, indeed, in the above presentation, rendered prominent the Christian side of his teaching, we have at the same time obtained also an insight into the Christian attitude of his mind. The most Christian element, not in his philosophy, but in himself, in his heart, is *faith in the coming of salvation*, for which he wished to prepare the way by his philosophy. He would not have desired and purposed the salvation of life, if he had not believed in the possibility of its attainment, if he had not strongly and freshly anticipated its actual realization. He felt in his soul the presence of Christ in history; he saw in the spirit, like Abraham, the day of the Lord; he felt himself

[59] See above, p. 168. Cf. Tim. 30. c. sq. [ii. p. 334]. Phil. 54 .a. [iv. p. 84]. So it must be in the microcosm, the State, as in the human soul. See Rep. 4, 434. b. sq. [ii. p. 118], and the beautiful passage in Legg. 12, 962. b. sq. [v. p. 535].

[60] Tim. 37. c. 92. c. [ii. pp. 340, 409]. Gen. i. 31; Ps. xvi. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 15.

[61] Legg. 10, 904. b. [v. p. 444]. Epin. 988. e. [vi. p. 29].

[62] John xvii. 5.

grounded and rooted with his whole mind in a divine power of salvation existing invisibly in the world; and this confidence in the powerful interposition of the Eternal in the fulness of times, was his star in the night, the source of his joyful enthusiasm, and strength of soul.[63] And not merely without, in history, but also in himself, in his own spiritual life, was he aware of this presence and activity of the divine. It was because he felt the redemptive power in himself, and a certain elevation to God, that he undertook to raise and redeem the life without him; and firmly and heartily convinced of the practicability of its redemption, he might almost, in this inward spiritual joyousness, have said with John: 'This is the victory which over cometh the world, even our faith!' (1 John v. 4.) Certain it is, faith and love are not less the central forces of the Platonic than of the Christian spiritual life.[64]

[63] The lofty, pure enthusiasm in Plato—forming an important point of approximation of Platonism to Christianity—gives at the same time a sufficient proof of the correctness of the view above presented of the practical religious side of his whole philosophy; it shows that Plato did not propose by his philosophy a mere theoretic perception of abstract truth, but to penetrate and elevate life was its highest aim and endeavour. And so he illustrates the saying of Pascal, that in Divine things one must love, in order to know.—*Pensées*, p. 186, etc.

[64] Love, in its noblest or truly Christian form, will hardly be refused to Plato; but objections may be raised to the strength and high estimate of *faith* here attributed to him. He seems sometimes to esteem faith but lightly. Rep. 5, 478. a. 7, 534. a. Tim. 51. c. [ii. pp. 165, 224, 357]. But his faith is to be found not in word but in deed—in the character and tendency of his mind—his confidence in and love for the divine.

CHAPTER VII.

NON-CHRISTIAN AND UNCHRISTIAN ELEMENTS IN PLATO; CONCLUSION.

PLATO could indeed *aim at* the salvation of life, but he could not *effect* it. A purer light, proceeding from the perception of the Eternal and Beautiful, than that of the Platonic philosophy, has not shone on the heathen world. But it was not granted to it, to be itself the life. (John i. 4.) And the cross on Golgotha, though covered with ignominy, is yet a more glorious and triumphant Theodicy, than the noble picture of the world glorified by God which existed in the mind of the Grecian sage. If we have clearly recognised the near relationship of his philosophy to Christianity, we must, if our judgment of this subject is to be a complete and final one, now bring into clear consciousness that also which essentially separates the two, and keeps them asunder.

Truly Christian, as we have seen, is the Platonic philosophy, in its view of the world and in its endeavour; truly pious and Christian the believing disposition of its author, his joyful hope in the coming of the Lord, and the future victory of the good in the history of the world. But this does not prevent the existence also, together with this predominant Christian character of the whole, of single non-Christian and even unchristian elements in Platonism. A circumstantial presentation of these non-Christian and unchristian points does not lie within our scope; we shall content ourselves with a brief intimation of the most important of them.

There have not been wanting, as already remarked, those who dispute the Christianity of Plato. They have made it their concern to set in a clear light, often in considerable detail, whatever appeared to them to be unchristian in him and his works, in doing which they have certainly very frequently been led by their prejudices and passions to wrong views and representations. Among these opponents of Plato's Christianity may be named as chief, besides the church-fathers mentioned above, B. Crispus, Parker, Colberg, Bucher, Wucherer, Sonntag, and Winkler. These all commit the error in their polemic writings on this subject, of regarding too exclusively the points of difference between Platonism and Christianity, and balancing these against the points of approximation and accordance not only not impartially—for then they must have found that the former are balanced by the latter—but also leaving entirely out of account the intrinsic difference in their respective values. For while the Christian element, as the superscription of our whole examination also expresses it, exists as a whole, and something which pervades Platonism, that which must be called non-Christian and unchristian appears always only in particulars,—as, in a fresh green tree, a dry twig may be found here and there. He, also, who would judge rightly in this case, should not overlook the distinction between non-Christian and unchristian, nor straightway declare that which does not accord with Christianity to be unchristian, since, indeed, it is only not Christian.

Only a single passage in Plato's works could perhaps be called unchristian, viz., that in which he nakedly and without qualification recommends the magistracy to use improper means —viz., falsehood—for a salutary purpose,[1] and where he consequently in a truly jesuitical and unevangelical manner counsels to do evil that good may come.

In another passage also, he seems to manifest an *unchristian temper*, when he says, that one must withdraw entirely from

[1] Rep. 3, 389. b. [ii. p. 69].

public life when he can accomplish nothing, and, leaving the irremediable to destruction, seek to save himself.[2] For this declaration, which sounds so strongly egotistical, Plato has been not a little censured by Niebuhr; and it cannot be denied, that it must have been severely blamed and condemned as thoroughly unchristian, if it had been more than the momentary ebullition of bitter indignation, which caused him to speak in a less Christian manner than he thought and acted.

Directly opposed to the spirit of the Gospel, is certainly also the already mentioned law of his Republic respecting the *exposure of weakly children;* and the ordinance, so revolting to our tender feelings, of *community of wives* in the warrior caste. But this sternness is to be charged rather to his times, and the customs of his country, than to himself. We do not condemn Moses on account of some severe laws, to which he was necessitated by the rudeness of his people, and which wounded the feelings of the sturdy ancients much less than ours.[3] And the offensiveness, in itself, of a community of wives in a whole class of citizens, is mitigated subjectively, with respect to the author of the proposal, by the Christian truth, that to the pure all things are pure (Tit. i. 15). This thought, which, as we saw, is not exclusively Plato's, did not proceed from the flesh and its concupiscence, but from a severely moral spirit. Far from wishing, by this institution, to encourage the base violent impulses of the sensuous nature, he purposed rather to effect by it a procreation of children conditioned by reason and virtue; and, in this, the reproach may certainly be not unjustly brought upon him, that he made a mistake in imagining that the sensuous life would leave so pure and uncorrupted, what he, with a pure mind and intention, was desiring to introduce into it.[4]

[2] Rep. 6, 496. d, e. [ii. p. 184].

[3] Deut. xx. 13, xxiv. 1, etc. Cf. Matt. xix. 8.

[4] What a moral view Plato had of marriage in other respects is shown by his maxims in reference to this subject. Legg. 6, 773. a. sq. [v. p. 226–7].

As Plato, by this ordinance, deviates from the views of Christianity on the dignity and destiny of woman, so by another he approaches them, and, indeed, rises apparently to a Christian way of thinking concerning women,—when, namely, in his state he wishes no less care to be expended on their education than on that of men, and especially requires that the same degree of culture should be given to the women as to the men.[5]

His Greek pride and depreciation of barbarians[6] can no more be reckoned to him as something purely unchristian, than his allowing the continuance of slavery in his Republic. For although, as touching this point, he was, on the one hand, very much held by the views of his time, yet, on the other hand, there appears in him much that is alleviating and kindred to the spirit of Christian humanity in this relation.[7]

But much more dangerous to Plato's reputation for Christianity than such offensive passages and expressions in his writings, is the charge of the unchristian way of thinking which is said to lie at the foundation of his theology. It has been long and generally maintained that his doctrine of God is *Pantheism*. It cannot be denied that the true Christian theology is the declared and irreconcileable opponent of Pantheism; and the prevalence in the Platonic philosophy of Pantheistic representations and elements also cannot be disputed. But should we immediately, on this confession, cry out like the High Priest, 'What further need have we of witnesses?' (Matt. xxvi. 65), and so reject and condemn the Platonic belief in God, without entering into a closer examination of it, this would unquestionably be a hasty and premature judgment of a matter which ought to be maturely weighed.*

[5] Rep. 5, 451. d. sq. [ii. p. 136].

[6] Rep. 5, 469. b. sq. 470. c. sq. [ii. pp. 155, 160].

[7] Legg. 6, 776. c, d. [v. p. 233].

* ['The causal energy of God as exerted in the formation and support of a world dependent on, but separate from Him, is not more congenial to

This is not the place to enter more narrowly on the difficult question with regard to Pantheism in general, and that of Plato in particular. We will only take briefly into view several points which must be duly considered and weighed, if a correct and just view of the matter is to be formed.

1. Those who are zealous to condemn absolutely and without further consideration whatever sounds only remotely like Pantheism, should not forget that with what measure they mete, it shall be measured to them again, and that the sentence of rejection which they, by the Gospel truth, bring against others, will probably, also, at the same time apply to themselves. For the most frequent and violent oppositions to Pantheistic modes of thinking, proceed from those who are deistically inclined; and, unquestionably, pure Christianity thrusts Deism from it with the same repugnance as it does Pantheism.

2. But though Christianity so earnestly seeks to separate and keep itself in its inner being and life from these two

religion, than it is acceptable to philosophy; but as a lesson of toleration is never superfluous, I may, before leaving this part of the subject, seasonably remind you that the maintenance of even the latest of these forms of the theory that identifies the Absolute Being with the world of sensible manifestation, is not felt by many of its upholders to be inconsistent with a practical acceptance of the *Christian faith*. Whether the world be the attribute of which God is the substance, or the effect of which God is the cause, they regard as a transcendental question, upon which Revelation was not meant to enlighten us, and though assuredly no small exercise of ingenuity would be necessary to reconcile this principle with the express declaration of the Scripture record, or to prove that Scripture did not, popularly indeed, but *positively*, decide the transcendental question itself; or again, to evince that the Deity of the Bible is only a manifestation of the Absolute Nature in a shape cognizable by the understanding—yet, while we firmly resist error in every shape, we ought to rejoice in being able to extend indulgence to those maintainers of it, whose happy inconsistency allows them to join with wayward speculative opinions in the regions of abstract thought, a reverential reception of the whole law of life, and a coincidence in all the requisitions of practical morality.'—*Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy*, by W. Archer Butler, A.M.—*Tr.*]

opposites, yet it is difficult, yea, almost impossible, for it in the form of science to be wholly free from them. History shows that Christian Theology has not, from its origin to the present day, succeeded in establishing a doctrine of God which is throughout pure and free from all Deistical and Pantheistic mixture. Every system of Dogmatics which has hitherto appeared, inclines more or less to one of these two extremes, and so to a certain non-Christianity.

3. But, if now even Christian science and thought have rarely or never succeeded in steering safely past these two rocks, it should not be rated too highly against heathen theology, if it has more frequently made shipwreck upon them. If Christian teachers concerning God, and those not seldom the most distinguished, have fallen into the error of Pantheism, the heathens certainly deserve some indulgence when they render themselves chargeable with the same fault.

4. And so much the more as Pantheism does not necessarily altogether exclude piety, but generally includes it and promotes it.[8] For, without doubt, a being powerfully impressed and pervaded by a sense of the Godhead, is essentially peculiar to piety in general, whether it be called a feeling or conscious-

[8] The most striking examples of this are Spinoza and Schleiermacher. There have been few more pious men than Spinoza; and his feeling and consciousness of God, his religiousness, was unquestionably livelier, stronger, and truer, than that of most who have accused and condemned him. One may think, speak, and write more correctly concerning God than did Spinoza, without, however, believing in Him so earnestly. For the belief in God of many men is such as they persuade themselves and others that they have, without really possessing it; and consists in nothing but a conception on which they have settled, and to which they set up no direct contradiction. How often and violently has Schleiermacher been accused of Pantheism! But who questions his piety? And his piety was not merely general, but of a truly Christian character, of which his sermons, his life, and his death, afford a speaking testimony. Modern theology and philosophy, recognising this connection of some pantheistic modes of representation with true piety, have too boldly asserted that Pantheism is a necessary process by which to attain the most lively form of piety.

ness. Now, it is undeniably in the nature of Pantheism, being throughout full of the intuition and feeling of life, to beget a *lively* impression of the presence of God; while Deism, on account of its prevailing tendency to the abstract, proves almost always injurious to the proper life of piety. To a Deist, certainly, the important distinction between the God abstractly conceived and deeply and truly felt, can as little be rendered evident, as the inspiring glory of a symphony or a fugue to the man who is wholly deficient in a sense for music.

5. The principal thing, however, in order to decide correctly in this matter, is to distinguish between intentional or conscious and unconscious or involuntary Pantheism; and not, for mere convenience of thought, to regard Pantheism as a general hat which is always ready and fits every pantheistic head without alteration, but to distinguish from each other the numerous and various stages by which, in its course of development, it rises from the first slight beginnings to its systematic perfection. Pantheism, in the proper sense of the word, does not exist everywhere, where pantheistic elements may be found; the latter occur frequently, the first rarely occurs.

6. The Platonic philosophy does not properly contain Pantheism systematically developed, but rather only pantheistic tendencies and ideas; and these, indeed, of the best and noblest kind,—that is, those which are least directly opposed to Christianity, and may be united with a deep and genuine piety. For a philosophy which, like that of Plato, has for its fulcrum and starting-point the recognition of the true and immortal Self in man, and makes the redemption and energizing of this the main object of its endeavour (p. 247), is infinitely removed from that absolutely unchristian Pantheism, whose highest and most religious thought is the total dissolution and sinking of the individual Ego in the ocean of the universe!

With the Pantheistic element of the Platonic philosophy is closely connected the absence in it of any proper doctrine of creation. Its doctrine of creation is not, indeed, unchristian,

but only not Christian. And have *we*, in our present Christian Theology, a true, complete, and scientifically elaborated doctrine of creation? I must confess that I know of none such. But until we do possess such an one, the *non*-Christian character of the Platonic teaching with respect to the formation of the world cannot be very exactly determined or adequately conceived of. A sufficient proof that Plato's dogma of the *mundane soul* was only *non*-Christian, and not directly unchristian, has been already furnished above from the history of Christian dogmas (p. 52, n. 75).

But we do not, with these scattered perceptions of points and doctrines which do not agree in Platonism and Christianity, attain the proper object of our present examination. It must be our earnest endeavour to seize that point which contains the most essential element of inner diversity between the Gospel and the Platonic philosophy, and which renders perfectly clear the principal difference between the two. And to find this point is not at all difficult. We have already hinted it at the opening of this chapter, and it proceeds immediately from the juxtaposition of our two main conceptions. The essence of Christianity consists, as we have seen, in *saving power*, that of Platonism in *saving purpose*. In Christianity, therefore, salvation is present in deed and reality; in Platonism only in thought, and as the end of its striving. Christian redemption takes place immediately in life, and belongs first to life, as from this also it proceeded; that of Platonism is a product of speculation, and is accordingly contained more within science, and is not particularly capacitated to work beyond this immediately into life. It is the abstract, still unreal, not the concrete truth, which Plato's mind had grasped. However nearly his theology and view of the world may approximate to the Christian, it is still lacking the really germinant and animating principle, the living heart-beat of Christianity,—namely, the *Person* and *Work*, or the *Life* and *Sufferings* of the Redeemer. For this is the principal thing which dis-

tinguishes the Christian from every other form of religion and faith.

We cannot regard the heathen doctrines of religion and ethics without inward admiration of their often surprising similarity to the Christian. The deeper we penetrate into the writings of the ancients, the less can we ward off the conviction that on the side of doctrine they truly stand but little behind Christianity; they contain not only almost all the moral doctrines and sublime sayings which the Gospel has given us, but many of these are even more sharply conceived and more beautifully presented in the former than in the latter; and those persons who have nothing better to extol in Christianity than its 'incomparable doctrines,' its sayings and moral sentences, do not know what they are doing or saying. It is truly not doctrine which raises Christianity high above all that history has formed or diffused as religion. Noble and divine truths have been taught by non-Christian sages in almost the same purity and elevation as by the Founder of Christianity, whom it is intended very greatly to honour when he is called the *Sage of Nazareth*. But the superiority in idea and feeling, the real life and love of the Holy One on earth, the incarnation of the Divine Word—this no philosophy or speculation in the world can effect like Christianity, since, indeed, the proper creation of life is placed in no man's power or might, and least of all in that of abstraction.

Now, from this, the mere ideal character of Platonism, is most clearly perceived its most important point of distinction from Christianity; and the reason is also seen for the exaggerated esteem which it has enjoyed in ancient and modern times. The occurrence of some rationalistic views and expressions in Plato's works is now no longer found to be so incomprehensible as it might at first appear in one, who is, on the whole, so supernaturalistic and mystical a thinker. It is perceived that the entire Greek culture, and especially Greek philosophy, must have been pervaded by rationalistic elements, because

here, in opposition to the prevalent thinking, cultivated up to this point, no actual entrance of the heavenly into the life of earth took place. It is further understood from this, why also the divine Plato, as little as any other heathen, bore in his soul a powerful impression of the holiness of God; and hence why in his, as in the whole heathen theology, so little is even said of this divine attribute, which in Christian Theology forms the basis of the doctrine of atonement. Because it does not bring the idea of God to penetrate into the living reality and personality, the human and finite ever remains predominant and highest in the heathen philosophy, while in Christianity, on the contrary, the eternal and infinite is preponderant. In the former the deification of man, in the latter the incarnation of God, is the summit of pious faith. In the former, therefore, a pure worship in spirit and truth is impossible, because, as Eschenmayer justly remarks, it is an unalterable relation, that the knowing subject is above his idea, the conceiving above his conception, the thinking above his thought. In the former, pride, in the latter, humility, is the foundation and mother of all virtue; for the *idea* is proud by its nature and birth, because it feels its transcendental power and tendency, and sits enthroned so clearly, safely, and fearlessly in its abstract dignity. In the former, human nature appears in the consciousness of its possessions; in the latter, in the feeling of its necessities. In the former, it perfects *itself of itself*, and *for itself;* in the latter, *by the influence of the Redeemer*, and for the Holy One in heaven. In the former, accordingly, virtue may indeed imagine herself perfect, since she looks only *in* and *around* or *below herself;* but in the latter, the man must perceive that he is saved by faith, and not of works (Eph. ii. 8), because he does not confine his regard to his own conception, nor to the world, but raises it to *that* conception which God has of the nature of true virtue, and to which his, as a human work, can never entirely correspond.

The heathen doctrine of virtue, which heightens the feeling

of self, is of course more comfortable and agreeable to human egotism than the heart-humbling evangelical doctrine of free grace; and since, according to Goethe's saying,[9] there are plenty of thorough, born heathens within the Church, it is indeed not to be wondered at, that the heathen dogma of the self-sufficiency of human nature for morality and salvation continues to have a large number of professors and admirers even among Christians; but it is indeed strange, that this otherwise very honourable heathen church should possess naïveté or boldness enough to announce their moral principle as the only truly Christian one. It may abuse and revile the evangelical doctrine of saving faith in Christ Jesus as much as it pleases,—this can do no injury to the dignity of Him who took upon Himself the shame of the cross, and patiently bore the sins of the world; but it ought to honour the truth, and not to deny, what no honest man with two eyes can deny, namely, that this doctrine, which is so irksome to many, is the clear and unambiguous doctrine of the Bible. It does not enhance the reputation of the embittered opponents of this doctrine, that, in order that they may express their repugnance to it strongly, coarsely, and regardlessly, they first rob it of its honourable name, and give it out to be the mental offspring of nobody knows whom, that thus they may shield themselves from the reproach of speaking disrespectfully of a matter deserving reverence. If they believe that they must come forward in the interest of a conviction which is sacred to them, and oppose the evangelical doctrine of grace, they should also have the courage to confess freely and openly, that, according to their conviction, the Gospel does not teach correctly on this point, and that, with respect to the moral relation of man to God, they place higher, and consider more true, the view of Plato and Aristotle, than that of our Lord and His disciples.

O, it certainly is much sweeter and less troublesome to rise by a Platonic bound of the intellect to the Divine in idea, than

[9] Werke, 37. S. 29.

to follow Christ in calm fidelity, and to bear after Him the cross of self-denial! For which reason, the crafty world, even at the present day, when it has arrived at the conviction that a certain striving towards God is an indispensable constituent of human dignity, strikes much rather into the easier and more brilliant way of *thinking* the Divine, than the way of the cross, so full of fighting and wounds; and, accordingly, much prefers an æsthetico-platonic or philosophico-moral doctrine of religion, to the Christian.

But, be it with this as it may, thus much is clear in respect of the heathen Platonic and the Christian anthropology, that the gain in human dignity is, in the former, only an apparent one, the loss a real one; in the latter, on the other hand, the loss is apparent, and the gain is real. How indeed did it happen, that classic heathendom, with all its high estimation, yea, almost deification of human nature, was yet unable to form or apprehend any proper conception of *freedom* and *personality*, while Christianity, which seems to degrade man almost entirely, denying throughout to his virtue any merit before God, is the only religion on earth from which the docrine of human dignity, personality, and freedom has been most gloriously developed? How is it, that heathen philosophy, even in the excellent Plato, in spite of all its struggling and soaring, could never get entirely free from a miserable fatalism, and consequently took back again with the religious left hand what of bearing and dignity it gave to man with the moral right hand? Plato presents to us the picture of man suffused with the splendour of the Godhead; but, alas! he bears the sullen chains of absolute irrational Necessity![10]

Gloriously indeed does this enthusiast speak of redemption;

[10] Tim. 68. d, e. Rep. 10, 616. c. 617. b. 620. e. [ii. pp. 379, 307–8, 311]. The *necessity* appears certainly very much mitigated by its ministering relation to the idea and power of the good. (Theaet. 176. a. [i. p. 411]. Cf. Matt. 18. 7). Still, even in Plato it is always sufficiently blank and oppressive.

but disregarding the fact, that even this is only a beautiful discourse, not a fact and history, the Platonic salvation, in consequence of its ideal nature, does not penetrate into the *whole* of human being and life, but only into its *upper regions*. And that which the second world-principle, Necessity, has contributed to the education of man, can in no manner be gained and won for the Deity;[11] it belongs eternally, by property and inheritance, to its mother. Yet it is a truly Christian mitigation of this in itself harsh thought, that Plato allows at least some broken rays of divine light to reach these gloomy depths, and that these participate from afar in the atoning grace and power of the spiritual and eternal;[12] and precisely in such pre-intimations of an all-overcoming, penetrating, and sanctifying love, is the Christian element, in his way of thinking, ever most beautifully manifested.

If we regard the *redemption*, which Plato, like Christianity, aims at, we cannot deny that its resemblance to the Christian is in great part more external than internal. Christianity would redeem men from the power of that which is evil and opposed to God; Platonism really only from *errors* and *deceptive appearance*. For, since to Plato, as a logical thinker, and in accordance with his principles, the being good coincides with true knowing, and the highest wisdom is also for him the highest morality; so also, on the other hand, as was intimated above (p. 57, n. 99), he can perceive the bad in nothing but the fault and error of the thinking reason, and he, like so many theologians and philosophers even of our times, understands by the bad nothing real (existent in and of itself), but only

[11] In this especially, as the Church fathers well understood, lies the deep significance of the Christian doctrine of Resurrection, that corporeality and matter are not by it excluded from the operations of the loving omnipotence of God, and that therefore there is nothing in the world which hinders or breaks the power of the Godhead, as the heathens imagined. Athen. de Res. pp. 315, 333. Iren. adv. Haer. 5, 3. 13. 15. Tert. Ap. 48. Cyr. Cat. 4, 29, etc.

[12] Tim. 71. b. sq. [ii. p. 383].

the empty perishable appearance, the in itself untrue and vain. And the relation of man to sin, his resignation to its power and dominion, is with him not so much, as according to the Christian view, one made by man himself, proceeding from the free act of his will, as rather one founded in the constitution of nature and the world, and into which man has fallen merely from ignorance. But even in this in fact not properly Christian conception of sin and salvation, we can at least commend the strict logical sequence and Christian honesty with which he clearly discerns and acknowledges, what those of the same faith in modern times will neither confess to themselves nor to others, that his *redemption* is an *aristocratic* one, and can be of service only to the intellectually and philosophically cultivated.[13]

But if now we have adequately discerned that there are indeed genuine Christian elements in Plato and his philosophy, but not so pure and rich as in the great historic phenomenon which we call Christianity—even as the character of metal is not wanting in any silver ore, yet appears most expressly in solid gold—our discussion has thus brought us back to the first chapter, and the views of the Church fathers concerning Platonism. We feel ourselves urged to accord cheerfully in the high praise which they lavish on his pious and Christian thoughts; but also, like them, to declare that his philosophy can never, as a whole, be set on the same level with the Gospel, or take its place. When we say there has never been a more Christian philosophy outside the Church of Christ than the Platonic—when we say that Christianity, which from the beginning lay in the womb of history, before its living appearance in the person and life of Jesus, came almost to the light, and to a manifestation, in a mind thinking, and inquiring after, Divine truth, and that this *ideal* gospel is Platonism—we have expressed the high-

[13] Phil. 33. b. [iv. p. 47]. There has been great opposition to the Catholic Church, because it maintains that out of it there is no salvation. But it may be asked, which assertion is harder or more intolerable,—this, or that of the old Greek philosophers, that happiness can be enjoyed only by those who philosophize? Arist. Eth. 10, 10.

est and best which we can with well-founded conviction say of it. More than an ideal power and magnitude Platonism can and will never be.

But if now Platonism, as it has been variously seen by us, is, on account of its ideal nature and religious elevation, and on account of the finished beauty of its dialectic form, so exceedingly adapted to excite the admiration and enthusiasm of all true thinkers, and to win all who are yearning towards the Divine,—how great, how infinitely great, must be the hidden inner might of the homely word from Jesus' life of poverty, since it, although dispensing with that which is so fascinating in Platonism, notwithstanding this, not only soon built a greater church than Plato ever saw about him, but also victoriously outlasted in Platonism its most respectable and intellectually most powerful rival! And if there is, confessedly, in the whole philosophical literature of ancient and modern times, no production which, in respect of the combination of æsthetic perfection of form with depth and wealth of ideas, and the energy of a mind divinely animated, could be placed by the side of Platonism,—then how incomparably high stands the often mistaken and scorned Christianity, since we ever perceive far beneath it the most sublime system which human art and wisdom ever created!

APPENDIX.

I.

TRANSLATION OF SOME PASSAGES REFERRED TO IN THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

FROM THE SO-CALLED APOLOGY OF SOCRATES, 30. a. sq. [i. p. 17–18.]

'And I think that no greater good has ever befallen you in the city, than my zeal for the service of the god. For I go about doing nothing else than persuading you, both young and old, to take no care for the body, or for riches, prior to or so much as for the soul, how it may be made most perfect, telling you that virtue does not spring from riches, but riches and all other human blessings, both private and public, from virtue. If, then, by saying these things, I corrupt the youth, these things must be mischievous; but if any one says that I speak other things than these, he misleads you. Therefore, I must say, O Athenians, either yield to Anytus, or do not; either dismiss me or not, since I shall not act otherwise, even though I must die many deaths.

'Murmur not, O Athenians, but continue to attend to my request, not to murmur at what I say, but to listen, for, as I think, you will derive benefit from listening. For I am going to say other things to you, at which perhaps you will raise a clamour, but on no account do so. Be well assured, then, if you put me to death, being such a man as I say I am, you will

not injure me more than yourselves. For neither will Melitus nor Anytus harm me; nor have they the power: for I do not think it is possible for a better man to be injured by a worse. He may perhaps have me condemned to death, or banished, or deprived of civil rights; and he or others may perhaps consider these as mighty evils. I, however, do not consider them so; but that it is much more so to do what he is now doing, to endeavour to put a man to death unjustly. Now, therefore, O Athenians, I am far from making a defence on my own behalf, as any one might think; but I do so on your behalf, lest by condemning me you should offend at all with respect to the gift of the deity to you. For if you should put me to death, you will not easily find such another, though it may be ridiculous to say so, altogether attached by the deity to this city as to a powerful and generous horse, somewhat sluggish from his size, and requiring to be roused by a gad-fly; so the deity appears to have united me, being such a person as I am, to the city, that I may rouse you, and persuade and reprove every one of you, nor ever cease besetting you throughout the whole day. Such another man, O Athenians, will not easily be found; therefore, if you will take my advice, you will spare me. But you, perhaps, being irritated, like drowsy persons who are roused from sleep, will strike me, and, yielding to Anytus, will unthinkingly condemn me to death; and then you will pass the rest of your life in sleep, unless the deity, caring for you, should send some one else to you.'

REPUBLIC, 8, 559, d. sq. [ii. p. 249–251].

'When a young man, brought up, as we now mentioned, without proper instruction, and in niggard fashion, comes to taste the drones' honey, and associates with those fiery terrible creatures, who can procure all sorts and varieties of pleasure, and from every quarter; then you may conceive, he somehow

begins to change the oligarchic for the democratic character. It must be so, he observes. Well, then, just as the state was changed by the aid of another party from without, to which it was related, is not the youth so changed likewise, through the aid of one species of desires from without, to others within him, which resemble them, and are allied thereto? By all means. And, methinks, if any alliance should come to counteract the oligarchic principle within him, either through his father or other relatives, admonishing and upbraiding him, then truly will arise sedition, opposition, and an internal struggle against himself. Undoubtedly. And sometimes, indeed, I think the democratic yields to the oligarchic principle, and some of the desires are destroyed, while others retire, because a certain modesty is engendered in the youth's soul, and he is again restored to order. This is sometimes the case, said he. And again, I suppose, when some desires retire, others allied to them secretly grow up, which, through neglect of parental instruction, become both many and powerful. This is usually the case, said he. They draw them then towards the same intimacies as before, and through their connections secretly generate a multitude? What else? And in the end, I think, they seize the citadel of the youth's soul, because they find it empty, as regards virtuous pursuits and true reasoning, —the best guardians and preservers of the rational part of men dear to the gods. Just so, said he. And then, indeed, false and arrogant reasonings and opinions rush up in their stead, and take their place in such people. Assuredly, said he. And does he not then come once more, and dwell openly among those Lotophagi? And if any aid come from intimate friends to strengthen the parsimonious principle within him, these said arrogant reasonings, by shutting against it the gates of the royal wall, neither permit the alliance itself, nor allow the ambassadorial admonitions of individual old men, but struggle against them, and maintain themselves in power;— and as for modesty, they call it stupidity, and thrust it out into

disgraceful exile, while temperance they call unmanliness, load it with abuse, and then expel it;—and as for moderation and decent expense, they persuade themselves that they are nothing else but rusticity and illiberality, and banish them from their territories, with many other unprofitable desires. Assuredly, they do. Having emptied and purified from all these desires the soul thus held by them, and initiated in the great mysteries, they next introduce, with encomiums and false eulogies, indolence and anarchy, extravagance and shamelessness, shining with a great retinue and wearing crowns,—calling insolence, good breeding,—anarchy, liberty,—luxury, magnificence,—and impudence, manliness. . . . And yet such an one, said I, will not listen to true reasoning, nor admit it into his stronghold,—should he be told that some pleasures are attached to honourable and virtuous desires, others to those that are depraved, and that he should pursue and honour the former, but chastise and hold captive the latter,—but in all these cases will dissent, and say that they are all alike, and to be held in equal honour. Assuredly, said he, one thus affected does this. Well then, said I, thus does he daily live, gratifying every incidental desire, sometimes getting drunk to the sound of the flute; at others, temperately drinking water; at others, again, exercising gymnastics; sometimes indolent and wholly careless; then again applying, as it were, to philosophy, —often, too, acting the politician, saying and doing by skips and jumps whatever comes first:—and, if he would imitate any of the military tribe, thither he is carried; if the mercantile, then again thither. Nor is his life regulated by any plan or law; but deeming this particular life pleasant, and free, and blessed, he follows it throughout.'

Ib. 562, a. sq. [ii. p. 251–3].

'It still remains, however, that we discuss, said I, that most excellent form of government and that most excellent man,—

tyranny and the tyrant. . . . Plain. Does not tyranny arise in the same manner from democracy, as democracy does from oligarchy? How—as respects the good, then, which oligarchy proposed to itself, and according to which it was constituted; was it not with a view of becoming extremely rich? Yes. An insatiable desire, then, for riches, and a neglect of all besides, through attention to the acquisition of wealth, destroys it. True, said he. And with reference to what democracy denominates good, an insatiable thirst for it destroys it likewise? But what say you, it denominates as good? Liberty, said I;—for this, you are told, is best found in a state under democratic rule, and hence any one naturally free would choose to dwell in this alone. This word liberty, said he, is vastly much talked about. Well then, observed I, as I was just going to say, does not the insatiable desire for this, and the neglect of other things, change even the form of government, and prepare it to need a tyrant? How? said he. When a state, said I, is under democratic rule, thirsts after liberty, and happens to have bad cup-bearers appointed it, and gets immoderately drunk with an unmixed draught thereof, it punishes even the governors, unless they be quite tame-spirited, and allow them excessive liberty, by accusing them of being corrupt and oligarchical. They do so, said he. But such as obey the magistrates, said I, it abuses as willing and good-for-nothing slaves; both publicly and in private they commending and honouring magistrates who resemble subjects, and subjects who resemble magistrates: must it not happen in such a state, that we must necessarily arrive at the acme of liberty? Of course. And must it not descend, too, my friend, said I, into private families, and at last reach even the brutes? How, said he, can we assert aught like this? For instance, said I, when a father gets used to become like his child, and fears his son, and the son [in like manner] his father, and has neither respect nor fear of his parents, in order, forsooth, that he may be free. . . . And other similar little things also:—and in such cases a

teacher fears and flatters his scholars, and the scholars despise their teachers, and so also their tutors; and, on the whole, the youths resemble those more advanced in years, and rival them both in speech and action; while the old men sit down with the young, and imitate them in their love of merriment and pleasantry, for fear of appearing morose and despotic. . . . But do you observe, said I, when all these things are collected together in a whole, that they make the soul of the citizens so sensitive, that if they were anyhow to be brought into slavery, they would be indignant, and not endure it;—for in the end, you know, they regard laws neither written nor unwritten, and hence no one will by any means become their master? I know it well, said he. This then, said I, my friend, I suppose, is that government so beautiful and youthful, whence tyranny springs. . . . Excessive liberty seems only to degenerate into excessive slavery, either in private individuals or states. It is probable, indeed. Probably then, said I, tyranny is established out of no other form than democracy.'

REPUBLIC, 10, 608, a. sq. [ii. p. 298].

'But we shall take along with us this discourse which we have held, as a counter-charm and incantation, being afraid to fall back again into a childish and vulgar love. We may perceive, then, that we are not to be much in earnest about such poetry as this, as if it were a serious affair, and approached to the truth; but the hearer is to be aware of it, and to be afraid for the republic within himself, and to entertain those opinions of poetry which we mentioned. I entirely agree, said he. For great is the contest, friend Glaucon, said I, great not such as it appears, to become a good or a bad man; wherefore it is not right to be moved, either by honour, or riches, or any magistracy whatever, or poetry, so to neglect justice and the other virtues. I agree with you from what we have argued, and so,

I think, will any one else. However, we have not yet, said I, discussed the greatest prize of virtue, and the rewards laid up for her. You speak of some prodigious greatness, said he, if there be other greater than those mentioned. But what is there, said I, can be great in a little time? for all this period from infancy to old age is but little in respect of the whole. Nothing at all indeed, said he. What then? Do you think an immortal being ought to be much concerned about such a period, and not about the whole of time? . . . Have you not perceived that our soul is immortal, and never perishes?'

THE LAWS, 731. e. seq. [v. p. 160].

'And this is what people say; that every man is naturally a friend to himself, and that it is well for a thing of this kind to be necessarily so. But, in truth, the cause of all his mistakes arises to each man, upon each occasion, through the violent love of self. For the lover is blinded with respect to the object loved. So that he judges improperly of things just, and good, and beautiful, through thinking that he ought always to honour what belongs to himself, in preference to truth. For it is necessary that he who is to be a great man, should love neither himself, nor the things belonging to himself, but what is just, whether it happens to be done by himself, or by another person rather. From this very same mistake, it has come to pass in all cases, that his ignorance appears to a person to be a wisdom peculiarly his own. Hence, although we know, so to say, nothing, we fancy we know everything; but, by not permitting others to do that of which we ourselves are ignorant, we are compelled to make mistakes through doing it ourselves. On this account, every man ought to avoid the vehement love of himself, and ever to follow one better than himself, without placing, in a matter of this kind, a feeling of shame in the foreground. But what are of less importance than these, and

mentioned frequently, and not less useful than these, it is proper for a person to remind himself of and to state. For, as something is always flowing away from us, it is necessary for something, on the contrary, to be flowing (to us). Now, recollection is the influx of thoughts which had left us. On which account it is meet to abstain from ill-timed laughter, and tears; and for every man to announce to every man that he must endeavour, by concealing all excessive joy and all excessive sorrow, to preserve a decent bearing, each person, while his daemon is standing steadily, going on successfully or unsuccessfully to places on high and steep, while Daemons are opposing with certain disturbances; and that it is meet ever to hope that delay will, when troubles fall on the great state, which he has given, make them less instead of greater, and (cause) to change from the present state to a better one; and with respect to the contraries of these, that they will always be present to them with good fortune. In these hopes it is meet for every one to live, and in the recollection of all these things to be sparing on no point, but ever, amidst serious and sportive occupations, to remind another and himself clearly.'

THE BANQUET, 211. d. seqq. [iii. p. 553, sq.].

'In this state should a person live, contemplating beauty in the abstract; which, should he behold it, will appear to be not in a bit of gold, nor in dress, nor in beautiful boys or youths; with the sight of which you are struck, and are ready, both yourself and many others, if it were possible, to look upon your beloved and live with them for ever, and to neither eat nor drink, but to feast yourself with the view, and to be together. What think you then, said she, would take place, if it were in the power of any person to behold beauty itself, clear as the light, pure and unmixed, but not polluted with human flesh and colour, and much of other kinds of mortal trash; but be able to

view the god-like, beautiful in its singleness of form? Think you, said she, that the life of a man would be of little account who looks thither, and beholds it with what he ought, and is in its company? Perceive you not that then alone will it be in the power of him, who looks upon the beautiful with the eye by which it can be seen, to beget not the shadowy show of virtue,—as not coming in contact with shadowy shows,—but virtue in reality, as coming in contact with a reality; and that to a person, begetting virtue in a reality and bringing her up, it will happen for him to become god-beloved, and, if ever man was, immortal.'

THE STATESMAN, 309, b. sq. [iii. p. 276, sq.].

'With respect to the rest, however, whose natures meeting with instruction are sufficient to reach to what is high-minded, and to receive through art a commingling with each other, of these it considers such, as incline more to manliness, to have a firmness of conduct, like the strong thread of the web; but such (as incline) more to a well-ordered conduct, (it considers) as making use (of a thread) supple and soft, and, according to the simile (from weaving), suited to a thinner stuff; and it endeavours to bind and weave together the natures inclining in a contrary direction from each other in some such manner. In what manner? In the first place, according to the alliance having fitted together the eternal part of their soul with a divine bond; and after that the divine (portion) that produces life with human. Why again have you said this? When an opinion really true exists with firmness in the soul, respecting the beautiful, and just, and good, and the contraries to these, I say that a god-like (opinion) is produced in a divine genius. It is proper it should. Do we not know that it befits the statesman and a good legislator alone to be able, with the discipline of the kingly science, to effect this very thing in

those who take properly a share in instruction, and whom we have just now mentioned? This is reasonable. What then? Is not a manly soul, when it lays hold of a truth of this kind, rendered mild? and would it not be willing in the highest degree to partake of things just? How not? But what, does not that, which is a part of a well-ordered nature, after receiving these opinions, become truly moderate and prudent, at least in a polity? Entirely so. But that in those alone, who have been born with noble manners from the first, and educated according to nature, this (bond) is naturally implanted through the laws? and for these too there is a remedy through art; and, as we said before, that this is the more divine bond of the parts of virtue which are naturally dissimilar, and tending to contraries? Most true. Since, then, this divine bond exists, there is scarcely any difficulty in either understanding the other bonds which are human, or for a person understanding to bring them to a completion. How so? And what are these bonds? Those of intermarriages and of a communion of children, and those relating to private betrothals and espousals. Let us say, then, that this is the end of the web of the statesman's doing, (so as for him) to weave with straight-weaving the manners of manly and temperate men, when the kingly science shall, by bringing together their common life, through a similarity in sentiment and friendship, complete the most magnificent and excellent of all webs, and enveloping all the rest in the state, both slaves and free-men, shall hold them together by this texture, and, as far as it is fitting for a state to become prosperous, shall rule and preside over it, deficient in that point not one jot.'

II.

It has been thought unnecessary to load the present translation with the original references to German works, which are not generally accessible to the English reader. A list, however, is subjoined of the principal of such works as will aid the reader in the investigation of the subject.

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